

HOME HELP
IN
MUSIC STUDY

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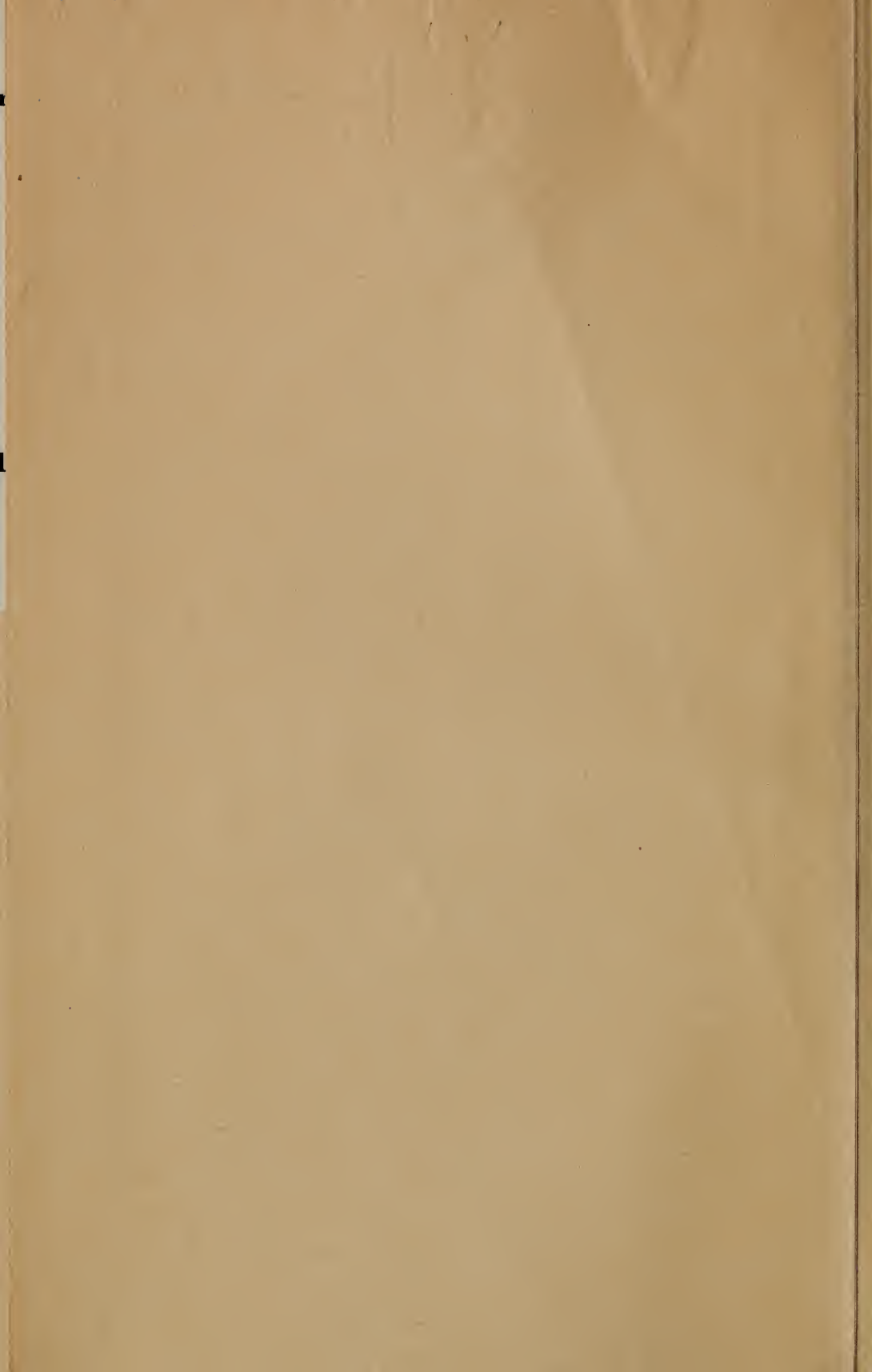
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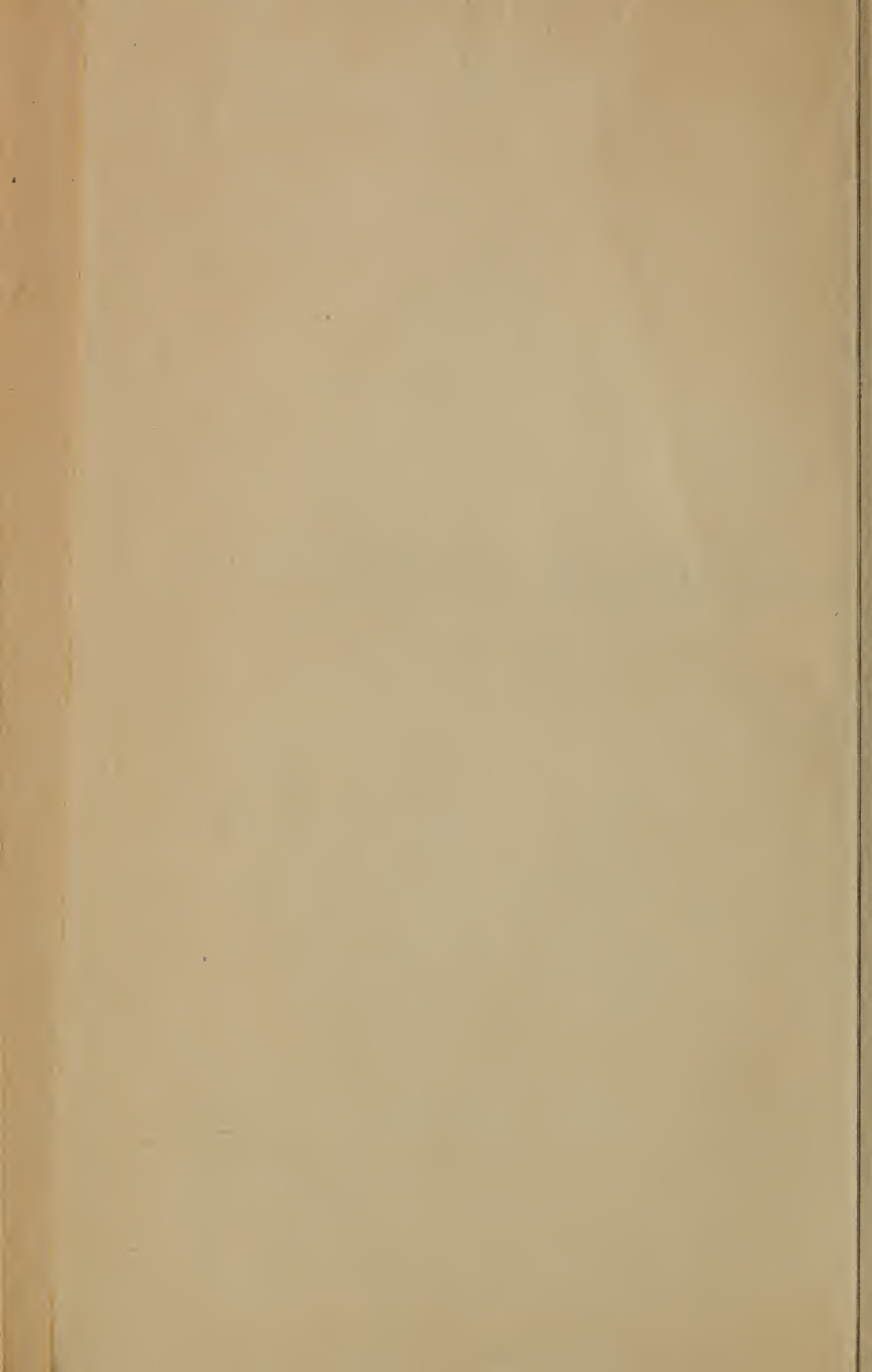
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Frank Marshall

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HOME HELP IN MUSIC STUDY





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THE FIRST MUSIC LESSON
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HOME HELP IN MUSIC STUDY

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LEARNING TO USE EARS,
EYES AND FINGERS

CONTAINING MANY SUGGESTIONS
HELPFUL TO MOTHERS IN THE HOME AND TO TEACHERS
AND KINDERGARTEN INSTRUCTORS

BY

HARRIETTE BROWER

Author of "The Art of the Pianist," "Piano Mastery," etc.



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TO
AMERICAN MOTHERS AND TO
TEACHERS OF PIANO AND KINDERGARTEN
AS WELL AS TO THE CHILDREN
THIS HANDFULL OF SUGGESTIONS AND STORIES
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED



AUTHOR'S NOTE

Several of the Musical Sketches which illustrate the main story of "Home Help in Music Study" have appeared in current periodicals and thanks are due the editors of *Musical America*, *The Musician*, *The Etude*, *The Woman's Home Companion*, and *The Youth's Companion* for permission to republish them. However, all of these have been considerably altered and expanded.

INTRODUCTION

THE study of music, what it should aim at and include, ought to be a subject of vital interest in every home throughout our land. American children are generally expected to "take piano lessons." The results of these lessons are often very meager and discouraging. If mothers and fathers could realize the difficulties which stand in the way, the causes which prevent expected results, existing evils might be remedied.

Far from agreeing with those who hold that only the child showing special aptitude for music should receive instruction, I am fully convinced that all children should be given an opportunity to learn music, just as every child is taught to read and spell. Music, especially that form of it used on the universal instrument—the piano—should be included in the regular list of studies. Even a small knowledge of music, a limited amount of instruction, if it be of the sort to arouse a feeling for, and awaken a love of, the art, is of untold value to the

growing child; its benefits can never be measured.

If we will consider for a moment how music is really being presented to our children, we will see there is much left to be desired in the manner of its induction. The frequently meager results lead us to exclaim: Are the teachers beginning at the right end? Or does the fault lie with mothers in the home?

Let us glance more closely at the home problem of music study. The usual method of procedure, after it has been decided to allow Harry or Jane to take piano lessons, is to engage a teacher and arrange with her the days and hours when the lessons shall be given. When father agrees to foot the bills, and mother finds a suitable piano teacher, decides lesson hours, and tells the children when to practise, it seems to both parents they have done all that can be expected of them.

And what of the children? How do they feel about this new undertaking? They are, let us say, between the ages of seven and nine, for it is not generally considered necessary to begin piano study any earlier. In most cases the inner feeling for sound, the "musical ear" is entirely untrained: it is a dormant sense, waiting to be awakened. Even though the children

have been taught to sing a little and know a few hymns and school songs, it does not mean that they have any practical idea of tone or pitch. They know nothing of the relation of one sound to another, their relative distances, their quality, their meaning: nothing of the keyboard they are to manipulate, nothing of rhythm, and generally they have only a hazy idea of fractional numbers.

Such is the human problem presented to the teacher. Her task is to take this child of eight, and in the space of thirty or forty minutes twice a week, form and mold him into a being alive to the "concord of sweet sounds," able to understand and produce them. His ear must be trained to distinguish pitch and quality of tone, his time- and rhythmic-sense educated, his fingers taught to touch the keys of his instrument at the right time and in the right way. All these things must be accomplished in the brief lesson periods. The truths she has to present must be imparted with such zeal and devotion, such enthusiasm and understanding, as will carry their momentum through the intervening practise hours.

The task is almost superhuman, the conditions well-nigh impossible. Do you wonder there are so few results from much of the teach-

ing of music which is being given to young students?

The rank and file of piano teachers do not look upon music as an educational study; therefore they do not present it in this light. The teacher of this type is content to tread the well-worn paths which have trammelled the study of music for many a day. She goes to the house twice a week and teaches the children a few scales, exercises, and little tunes. She has never considered the many other subjects that belong to the study of music in these modern days. Is it any wonder that her pupils grow up with deaf ears and little or no rhythmic sense?

If, however, the teacher be thoroughly equipped for her work, she will conduct her instruction along modern lines. For one thing, she will suggest that one of the weekly lessons shall be taken in a class with other children. She will explain to the mother that many subjects, such as ear training, hand forming, and finger movements, can be taught to far better advantage in class than in private lessons; for class lessons are inspiring and stimulating. But in many cases parents do not comprehend these advantages. They generally prefer private

lessons; at least mother thinks they are better, as that is the way she studied music.

The teacher knows full well that mother is an important factor in the case. But mother is often unacquainted with modern ways of imparting musical instruction. It is supremely necessary that she be enlightened and shown the needs of her children in their music study. If she takes an interest in the work, the real interest which every true mother should take, she can supplement the efforts of the teacher amazingly.

In order that children should awaken to the beauty and glory of the world of tones, and learn to love music and music study, it is of the greatest importance for them to learn many things about music, before the real study of music begins. They must learn to hear, to sing, to imitate Nature's sounds and rhythms. Where can they learn these things better than in the home, if there is only some one in it who will take enough interest in this vital subject to initiate the little ones into the pleasures and secrets of tone and rhythm, of listening and imitating.

There is no need to wait till the child has reached the age of eight or nine before arousing the listening sense: the sooner he consciously

learns to hear, the better for him. Every ounce of early knowledge and experience will help later on to make the child more alive to sounds, more receptive to the right kind of musical instruction.

It cannot be too strongly urged that the mother is mainly responsible for the awakening of musical intelligence in the children. The mother can make a bit of musical atmosphere in the home by her very attitude toward music. More than this, by taking thought, she will find some of the many ways in which she can help to arouse a sense for time and tune. She can learn how to prepare the soil for the seed. Through her efforts, though they may be slight, she may pave the way for the first music lessons.

A child who has been somewhat prepared for music study by home influence is a far more apt pupil than one whose mind is blank on the subject. His thought has been quickened to an extent otherwise undreamed of. A child so prepared has open ears, ready fingers, and alert intelligence. He comprehends what the teacher means by time and beat, by pitch of sounds, by simple note values, by distance of one note from another, their quality and so on. His little deaf ears have been unstopped, his

stiff, unwieldy little fingers have been limbered, shaped, and made ready to express action and nimbleness, and are ready to come in contact with the ivory keys. Those little feet have learned to walk and tap in rhythms of various sorts. Thus you can readily see that if these subjects can be presented and assimilated in the right way, very much time will be gained.

If you, the mother, can teach the children—or have the children taught—some of these necessary things in the home, and out of doors with Nature, their progress will be much more rapid and intelligent when they start their piano lessons.

And having begun the good work of awakening the young intelligence to the wonders of tone and rhythm, you should not stop there; your efforts should extend through the early years of musical instruction, for your loving care will be more than ever needed at this period. Here again the responsibility rests with you as to what kind of work Harry or Jane will do, or what sort of progress they will make.

If you ask what course to pursue to bring about these desired results, I suggest a few of

the means by which the love and appreciation of music may be fostered.

First: Create a musical atmosphere for your children in the home. Teach the children little songs and sing with them. Keep up your own music, for their sakes as well as for your own. Not only "play a little"—learn to play well. Study regularly with a teacher. Your own practise will be stimulating to the children, something they will always associate with the home, and will never forget.

Second: Look after the practise periods. If you merely assign the hours and expect the child to go to the piano at those times because told to do it, you have not done your whole duty, nor shown the necessary interest. Looking after the practise includes more than telling the child to go and do it. Help him with that music lesson as you often do with school lessons. If possible, sit in the room while he is at the piano. Make yourself thoroughly familiar with what he has to learn, and see to it that he is well prepared when the lesson day arrives.

Third: Allow the children to have one class lesson along with their private lessons, each week. One class and one private hour once a week is an ideal combination, providing the

teacher is able to meet it, and it is of great advantage to the pupil. If the teacher you have selected is unable to teach in this way, look further till you find one who is accustomed to do so.

A personal attendance at the class lesson is very desirable, so that you may see precisely what is being taught, and how the work is being presented. By doing this you will be able to direct the children's practise more intelligently at home.

Home preparation for music study, over which the mother, or some one competent, shall preside and become the guiding star, is the subject and meaning of the following sketches.

The wide-awake piano teacher realizes the urgent need for such "pre-keyboard" preparation for her pupil. She does what she can in this direction, but she is often handicapped by the parents of her pupils, who wish to see quick results without sufficient care and time given to the foundation.

The subject of early preparedness for music study is one that should lie very near our hearts, and should make an appeal to every mother. In the story-sketches which follow, it is shown how one enthusiastic teacher supplied this preparation to four children during a summer

vacation, and at the same time awakened the mother to see the duty and privilege which were hers in the home, to help on the good work. Through the medium of Helen Richmond, the author has expressed many of her own tried and tested ideas and experiences.

It is hoped they will prove suggestive and helpful to every mother and to every teacher of music.

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HOME HELP IN MUSIC STUDY

CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNING

“I do hope our children will be musical,” remarked Marianne Richmond, as she poured her husband’s second cup of coffee. The little family was at breakfast, seated in a cool corner of the veranda, where vines shielded one from the early sunshine and where charming views of hill and valley met the eye.

“It’s a big responsibility you’re wishing for, Marianne,” and Herbert Richmond looked down significantly at the curly heads bending over their plates.

“They needn’t be professional, of course,” went on Marianne; “I don’t expect that, but they ought to know something of the art. I certainly want Dorothy to play the piano, and perhaps Harold will have some taste for it, too, or maybe he will take to the violin; it’s

especially nice for a young man to know something of music so that he can entertain his friends with it."

The twins, hearing their names, looked up wonderingly. They were "just turned five," healthy, sturdy little creatures, full of life and vitality. Indeed they could hardly help being vigorously healthy, as they almost lived out of doors from early morning till twilight, especially all through the long summer.

"Do you know, I should like to have charge of their musical training," remarked Helen Richmond, Herbert's sister, who played the piano beautifully herself, and who had just come down from the city, where she had had a busy professional season, to be with her brother and his family for the summer.

"Never fear, Helen, you shall have them to teach when the time comes," answered their father; "that is, if you can stand it. But that won't be for a long time yet—three or four years at least."

"Oh, indeed, do you think that? It may surprise you to hear that, with your permission, I intend to begin with them right away."

"What will you begin, Aunt Helen?" asked Dorothy, with wide-open blue eyes.

"Oh, something very nice—you will see."

“But surely, Helen, they are much too young to have piano lessons—I could not give my consent,” began Marianne.

“I said ‘musical training’ a moment ago, didn’t I? That doesn’t necessarily mean piano lessons. There are a lot of nice things to be learned about music quite away from the piano. Will you let me try my hand with the children in my own way? And furthermore, will you promise to aid and abet me whenever I ask your help?”

Mr. Richmond looked across the table at his wife. “I think we can safely say amen to her proposition, Marianne—don’t you think?”

“It’s very good of you, Helen, to be willing,” began Marianne; then she broke off, doubtfully.

“What’s ‘amen’ mean?” asked Harold, looking anxiously at Papa.

“Why, Harold, don’t you know?” put in Dorothy. “I heard Uncle Harry say it means ‘let it be done.’ So whatever Aunt Helen wants to do will be done—see?”

“That nails it,” laughed Papa. “Dorothy, you’re a philosopher.”

“Can’t we begin now? You said it was nice,” pleaded Harold.

Herbert pushed back his chair. “I foresee,

Helena, that you will have your hands full. Well, I must be off; time and trains don't wait for the suburbanite. Come, Marianne, give me your orders for the day." They rose and went into the house through one of the long windows.

"Wait a moment, children," said Aunt Helen, "and we will begin our music game. Just sit still where you are a bit, and listen to this." She took up a silver knife from the table and gave a glass near her a little quick tap. The glass was partly filled with water, and the little blow caused it to give out a clear, musical tone, which arrested the children's attention at once.

"Is it a high tone do you think, Dorothy?"

"Yes, I guess it is," answered the child.

"Can you make it with your voice?"

Both began to try at once. The first attempts were wide of the mark and chaos reigned for a moment.

"Wait, wait, children; one at a time. Now, Harold, you try."

Harold was rather shy at the start, but with encouragement he approached somewhat near the sound which Helen repeated for him a number of times with her click on the glass.

Dorothy listened to his attempts with a most

serious expression on her small face. When her turn came she improved on her brother's efforts by coming nearer to the tone than he had done.

"Now I'll try Papa's glass," said Helen, "and we'll see if that has just the same sound as this. Listen, do you think it has?"

Harold thought it had. Dorothy was uncertain at first, but soon discovered the sounds were different.

"Dodo finds Papa's glass makes another sound from mine, Harold; do you hear it? Make the sound yourself, just the best you can. There, that's pretty well. Now you, Dodo, higher, higher—there, that's it. Good! I'll play on the two glasses, one after the other; listen—which has the higher sound?"

"Oh, yours, I can hear it," cried Dorothy, gleefully, hopping on one foot and then on the other. Harold joined in; he usually did what Dorothy did; in a few years the tables would probably be turned.

Helen tapped the two glasses alternately and her little auditors understood quite clearly that the second glass was higher than the first and the first was lower than the second. "About a third apart," she remarked, though they didn't know what she meant just then.

“Sounds like ding-dong,” said Dorothy.

“We might call it the Ding-Dong game,” said Aunt Helen, giving each rosy face a kiss.

“Now little chicks,” she added, “Betsy wants to clear the table. You can run out and play, for I am going to practise; but this afternoon, if you are good, I’ll take you down to Sunshine Dell.”

CHAPTER II

IN SUNSHINE DELL

IT was early in June.

The Richmonds had only last week left their cosy apartment in the city to take possession of Hillcrest, the little cottage in the country, where they usually passed the summer months. This year a piano had been installed, and Helen Richmond had arranged to spend her vacation with them. Marianne had often said they never could expect to have Nellie with them unless they had a piano, for she was not willing to neglect her music in the summer. Indeed it was during the vacation months that she did much extra study. So this year it had all been planned beforehand, and Helen had joyfully acquiesced in the arrangement.

Herbert Richmond was engaged on a prominent magazine. Besides this he was writing a book, which occupied most of his spare time. As for music, he knew just enough about it to play simple piano accompaniments, and could

sing easy tunes with tolerable correctness. In college days, not yet so far back in the past, his rich baritone had helped to swell the Glee Club chorus. He appreciated the training this practise had given him, for he had a natural fondness for music. Marianne Richmond had had the advantage of considerable musical instruction in her girlhood, and before her marriage had the name of playing very well. After this event she had allowed her zeal to languish and her practise to drop gradually, as so many young matrons are inclined to do, in like circumstances, until she could barely get through hymns and easy dance music.

“Oh, I have had to give up my music,” she would assert, between a laugh and a sigh; “the cares of housekeeping and a family are too many for me.”

Helen always opposed this belief, whenever it was expressed in her presence.

“You know you could give an hour a day to your music, just as well as not,” she would say over and over again. “You would never miss that bit of time throughout the day. Look at Mrs. Butler, for instance; she keeps up her music, though she has three children. There is Mrs. Sterns, too, and Alice Newlands, and several more; they manage it in spite of house-

hold and family cares, though they seem to have their hands full with home and outside matters.”

“The more you have to do, the more you can do’—isn’t that the way it runs?” observed Marianne, sweetly. “Well, dear, I may come back to music one day, then I’ll get you to teach me.”

It was therefore with various half formed plans in her mind for the enlightenment of her brother’s family in musical matters, that Miss Richmond turned the lock on her studio in the great city, and had come down to join the little group at Hillcrest that summer.

It was nearly four o’clock on that same June afternoon. Helen sat near the open window of her pretty chamber, a book in her lap. She was not reading, but looking dreamily out to the low-lying hills in the distance. Along the hall came the tripping of little feet toward her door.

“Where are you, Aunt Helen? Oh, you said you’d take us to the Dell, if we were good. We have been as good as could be. We did our lessons with Mamma” (that meant reading and spelling with a couple of stories thrown in) “and we did the Ding-Dong song too.”

“You did?” Helen’s tone was one of mingled surprise and admiration. Then she added:

“Very well, kiddies; we’ll go right away.”

Sunshine Dell is just at the foot of the hill, as you leave the road and cross a small strip of grassy turf, where some fine old trees cluster. They seem, as it were, to form a natural circle. The soft ground at their feet is overgrown with the richest moss. Vines climb up the trunks of the great trees; these vines later in the season will be grown enough to festoon themselves from bough to bough. Best of all, a dear little brook trickles its way through the moss. An ideal spot for day dreams; a spot that by night is no doubt haunted by all sorts of fairies and elves.

Helen and the children ran lightly down the grassy slope and entered the sylvan shades of the Dell. It is called “Sunshine Dell” perhaps because the sunlight filters through the vines and tree branches in such a way as to make long bars of golden light over the green moss and sparkling water. In the morning the sun casts them from one direction, while in the afternoon they slant from the opposite direction; indeed it is hard to say at which time of the day the place is lovelier. At all times there are shady

nooks where one may find wild flowers—or sail toy boats in the little brook, if one is five—or read and dream, if one is five and fifteen.

The trio soon reached a favorite tree which had especially comfortable hollows in its rugged trunk, wherein to cuddle down. Helen still carried the book she had been reading; her fingers were between its leaves.

“You know this is the beautiful month of June. You’ve learned the names of all the months, haven’t you?” she asked.

“Oh, yes; we know them all,” cried both children in one breath.

“Well, there was a man, a poet, who loved this month of June and made a pretty verse about it. You can learn it now, as I read it; we’ll see who remembers most of it from once hearing.” And she read very slowly and distinctly, line by line:

“And what so rare as a day in June?

Then, if ever, come perfect days;

Then Heaven tries earth if it be in tune,

And on it softly her warm ear lays.”

The children often had such tests; indeed they were expected to learn some little verse daily; so they were not very long in mastering this one.

“The poet says further,” went on Helen:

“Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten.”

“Now we will use our ears and see what we can hear.”

“But I don’t hear anything. It’s just as still—just as still as a mouse,” whispered Dorothy.

Both children listened breathlessly to what they thought was stillness; then it seemed as though one sound after another rose out of the palpitating hush, and came toward them.

“There’s a bird,” whispered Harold.

“There are two,” added Dorothy, after a moment. “And I hear grasshoppers and all sorts of queer little buzzing noises.”

“You will hear the woodpecker very soon, for I saw him just disappearing ’round the trunk of that tree over there,” said Helen. “Some of these sounds you hear are musical sounds, but others are merely noises; which do you think are the nicest?”

“Oh, the birds, of course,” said Dorothy with conviction, as she rested her little chin on one chubby palm and gazed up into the branches above her head.

“That bird up there seems to sing three notes

every time he opens his bill. Do you hear them?"

Some seconds of listening made this apparent to the small watchers.

"You already hear the three notes; now tell me whether they go up high or down low?" And Helen showed them what she meant by singing little groups of notes that ended on high tones, or that finished on lower notes; until they quite understood her meaning.

After more listening, Dorothy asserted that the middle sound went down quite a long way from the first one, while Harold discovered that the third sound went up but not as far as the first.

"Try to sing the bird song," encouraged Helen, pleased with their interest, and well knowing that every effort to locate sound was just so much mental and musical training, and would help along the plan she was forming for her little niece and nephew.

"Oh, look, that bird from up there has come down—he is jumping along the grass—he is quite near us—see, see!" whispered Harold, while all listened and watched.

Helen lifted a slender pipe that hung from a chain at her belt, and blew a clear, sweet note. The little bird had hopped along till he was

quite near them. He didn't seem startled a bit, on the contrary, he put his head on one side and listened, then uttered some detached notes and hopped a step or two nearer along the mossy carpet. Helen blew again; then for a moment or two there was a duet between the bird and the pipe, while the children hardly drew breath for fear of frightening the tiny songster. At last he ruffled his little throat, chirped two or three wonderful bits of trills and flew back to the top of the tree.

"Say, Aunt Helen, what is that singing stick you have?" asked Harold.

"That's called a pitch pipe, laddie. See, it makes two tones like this; tell me if you find any difference in them."

"Why, of course," interposed Dorothy quickly; "one is higher than the other."

"I think one is lower than the other," asserted Harold.

"You're both right, my dears. Now the high note is called *C*, and the other is *A*. Listen to them over and over. Which one am I sounding now?"

"*C*," cried Dorothy.

"*A*," exclaimed Harold.

"Dorothy is right. Now listen again to the two notes, and after you have sung them three

times, you can pick a few of those wild flowers over there, with some of the small ferns near them, and then we'll go back to the house, for it's not long till dinner."

Arrived at the house, the children took their flowers into the dining-room, and arranged them in two pretty nosegays for Papa's and Mamma's places at the dinner table, which was already laid.

Helen seated herself at the piano, and the children, as soon as their floral decorations were completed, came and stood beside her. She was playing a piece with little trills and bird notes in it. Her small auditors listened almost intently as they had done down in the dell an hour before.

"That sounds almost like a little bird," said Dorothy, as the music stopped.

Helen smiled with pleasure.

"You've just guessed it, sweetheart. It was made by a great composer named Grieg. He was fond of everything in nature—of the high mountains with the waterfalls tumbling and foaming down their sides, of the first spring flowers, of the bees, the butterflies and the birds. I am sure he would have listened to the birds just as we did down in the dell. His summer home was built right in among the

trees, so that he could sit in his window and look and listen to the little songsters. The piece I have played is a picture in tones of a *Little Bird*—that's what he called it. Listen to it again, and you will hear the bird notes and trills more distinctly than you did before, because you know what to listen for. Don't you think it's a good likeness?"

She played it twice through, then sent them off to play.

In the evening, after the children had been put to bed, and their elders were sitting on the veranda enjoying the perfect June night, Helen said:

"Herbert, I wish you'd bring me one of those xylophones, when you come from town to-morrow afternoon, will you?"

"Is it possible my fair sister is relinquishing the piano in favor of one of those machines?" He threw up his hands in mock despair.

"Hardly that. I'm going to use the xylophone for the children. We began our musical studies to-day by learning a few sounds and getting an inkling of tone magic. They are really apt pupils, besides being the dearest little things in the world. How often we hear it said that a child's mind is like a bit of soft

wax, or a sensitized plate, ready to take every impression. How careful we should all be to guard what is said and done in their presence!"

"I suppose if we know just how to handle them, we can make almost anything out of them," remarked Marianne, reflectively.

"Just so," returned Helen. "This morning you said you hoped your children would prove to be musical, because music is a pleasant accomplishment, but that you would wait several years before considering the subject of their music study. My dear, now is the time to prepare the soil for the seed; they can be made musical *now*, if they are treated in the right way."

"Helen is now in her element," laughed Herbert, good-naturedly, as he swung himself into the hammock.

His sister did not answer his laugh. Her face was grave and sweet as she said:

"It is an exquisite pleasure to be the means of awakening a love for music in any one, especially in the heart of a child. That is the pleasant task I have set myself. And remember you have promised to help, and to do all I ask. So I shall expect to see that xylophone walk in to-morrow."

CHAPTER III

THE HEARING EAR

THE next morning it rained. It was only a summer shower, to be sure, but it kept the children indoors for a while, or rather on the wide veranda, where they were just now busy with pictures and paints. Such active little creatures—always busy and occupied with something. So thought Helen, as she stood in the doorway and watched them. Why should not some of this energy be turned in the direction of music? There were many things for them to learn before they were ready to begin the study of the piano. First the ear, then the hand and fingers should be developed. She would love to lead their little feet along the path, but so gently and tenderly that they would absorb the knowledge almost unconsciously, scarcely knowing how it came.

Full of these thoughts and the vista they opened, she raised the silver pipe and blew a single tone. The children looked up a little startled.

“Dorothy, what is the name of that tone you heard?”

“I think it’s *C*, Aunt Helen.”

“And, Harold, what is this one?”

“It must be the other—I think it’s lower anyway,” said politic Harold.

“Good for you both! Now come in to the piano, and see if you find the same sounds there.”

She touched first *C*, then *A* several times, till the children became more familiar with the two sounds, and could recognize each with some accuracy. Then they tried singing the two tones, and succeeded better than Helen had expected. She then explained that the white key between *A* and *C* was *B*. Adding the new note to the others, they now sang the three up and back, then “guessed” them singly, skipping about in turn, which they found to be great fun.

“I’ll play you a little piece now, children; it is called *The Happy Farmer*. He is coming home from his day’s work; of course his children are watching for him, and come running down the road to meet him, just as you watch for Papa, and run to meet him when he comes back from the city. This little piece was written by a dear, kind musician who loved chil-

dren and whom all children love to-day as much as they did when he was living among us, though he was born more than a hundred years ago."

"What was his name?" cried Dorothy and Harold almost in the same breath.

"His name was Robert Schumann; say it over after me—that's right. And what is the name of the piece I am going to play? Right again. Now I will play it and you can listen."

Helen played the little piece—over which so many little fingers have toiled, and so many small hearts have been inspired—and played it twice through. Seeing her auditors were still interested and could safely be held a few moments longer, she said:

"Isn't that a nice tune? Try and sing it—look, I will just play the tune itself with one hand; you can sing *la* to each note."

Their efforts were so funny at first that each laughed at the other; they seemed to think it all the greatest joke in the world. But with repeated trials, and encouraged by Helen's unflagging patience and enthusiasm, they did very well indeed.

"Now I'll play the piece once more all through, and then you can tell me which hand plays the tune."

This they were quite able to do, when the piece was finished.

Mamma had come in and was listening too.

“O Mamma, I wish I could make music on the piano like Aunty Helen,” exclaimed Dorothy, nestling up to her mother.

“Would you like to take music lessons, Dorothy?” asked her mother, looking down at the eager little face upturned to her own.

“Yes, Mamma; yes, really.”

“And how about Harold—would he like it too?”

Harold, thus appealed to, stuck his fists in the pockets of his white sailor suit, and looked dubious.

“Music’s for girls,” he said at last, with an air of firm, unalterable conviction.

“Who told you that?” asked Mamma in amazement.

“Phil Scott says so, and the other fellows too.”

Helen could not repress a merry laugh.

“Why, Harold, you are quite mistaken; music is just as much for boys as it is for girls—perhaps even more. You wouldn’t want Dodo to get ahead of you or know more than you do. You will both learn to play the piano, and all

in good time. Now run back to your pictures and paints."

"And when you have finished, be sure to put them away in their places," added Mamma.

"Yes, Mamma, we will." And they bounded away.

"You've certainly made those children enthusiastic, Helen; how did you ever do it?"

"I don't know, except I enjoy the thing I do, and love to teach it. And then I talk to little people as though they were reasoning, thinking beings, and could understand. Although Dodo and Harold are ready for any fun and frolic, they are rather mature children in some ways, due no doubt to their being with their elders a good deal."

"Yes, and I'm careful about their companions too. In the city they haven't many children to play with, for they are not in school yet. I have always taught them at home."

"They are little dears," said Helen warmly. "You have taught them two of the greatest things, obedience and consideration for others; they don't go around acting as if the whole world and all the people in it were created solely to wait on them, and contribute to their happiness."

"Children like that are terrors," commented

Marianne, with a shiver of her pretty shoulders.

“Well, yours are a happiness and a blessing. But to come back to the music question. If the subject is treated in the right way, there is no reason why children should not love it. Even the practising can be—should be—made so interesting that they will want to do it. But whoever teaches them will, of course, need your help, Marianne.”

“Indeed you are to teach them when the time comes—no one else.”

“Well, then, if I am to teach them, I shall want you to be present at the lessons, to see what they are being taught, for then you can direct their practise intelligently. Of course I want you to look after that, to see that it is done regularly and correctly. Now don't say you haven't time,” as she caught Marianne's deprecating gesture, “for you have time—all there is! You cannot even foresee what music may mean to those children; you will be building for eternity.”

“You are a rare one, my Helen,” said the young mother, a good deal impressed. “I expect you will soon be telling me I ought to take up my music this summer.”

“I only wish you would; no time like the present, you know.”

When Herbert Richmond was sighted by the twins, coming up the road somewhat later that afternoon than his usual hour, they saw he was carrying a long, bulgy package. They ran down to meet him, almost tumbling over each other in wild eagerness to see who would reach the goal first.

“Oh, Papa, what’s in that bundle?” cried Dorothy, between the kisses she gave her father; while Harold planted himself in the middle of the road, to prevent further advance, and eyed the package critically. As Father often brought them something from the city, they had begun to think there were possibilities in every bundle that he took the trouble to carry from town.

“No, children, it is not for you this time; it’s for Aunt Helen.”

“May I take it to her?” asked chivalrous Harold.

“No, son; it’s too heavy.”

So the children had to be content to escort the Lord of the Manor up to his own door, without any special guerdon; but after the

mysterious package was deposited in Aunt Helen's room, they were rewarded with a rare good frolic with their father, for which they had waited the long day through.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW TOY

THE next morning the twins heard strange little tinkling sounds, that seemed to come from the veranda below. They jumped from their little beds and were in such haste to dress that Mamma's fingers could hardly fasten the buttons quickly enough; but Mamma insisted on patience till all was neatly arranged. As soon as possible, however, they flew downstairs, and out on the veranda.

They found Aunt Helen seated before a table on which was a long, queer looking object, seemingly made out of gold and silver. She was tapping the shining slips of metal with a stick that had a ball on the end of it. She didn't speak to her listeners, who watched her with wondering eyes, but kept right on with the tune. It was quite a familiar tune; they had heard it before.

"Well, kiddies, you're out early this morning," was Helen's cheery greeting, as she

stopped playing and looked up at each eager little face.

"I know what that song is, Aunt Helen," cried Dorothy, jumping up and down gaily.

"Did you ever hear it before, Harold?"

"Of course; you played it on the piano."

"Now, Dorothy, you can tell us what it is called."

But the little maiden "just couldn't think"; the name was right in the "middle of her tongue," but it wouldn't roll off.

"I know," exclaimed Harold; "it's *The Jolly Farmer*."

"Good for you! Now don't you remember, my little Dodo?"

"It's *The Happy Farmer*, coming home from his work in the fields."

"Yes, and I'll play it once more, since you have been such good children as to remember the name so well." And she repeated the melody.

"Now breakfast is ready and we mustn't be late."

As they sat at table that morning, Mr. Richmond remarked casually:

"The Scotts are coming out to occupy that

vacant cottage down the road; I forgot to mention it last night."

"Phil is coming too—isn't he, Papa?"

"I see no reason why he shouldn't come too."

"Oh, goody, goody, Phil is coming—Phil is coming!" intoned Harold.

"I'm glad they have decided to spend the summer here," said Mamma; "Phil seems such a nice little fellow."

"Isn't he the boy who says that music is only meant for girls?" asked Helen, with a side glance at Harold.

"He didn't mean any harm," said the boy after a pause. "Maybe he doesn't know how nice it is."

"We'll show him how nice it is. He can join us each morning, if his mother is willing, when we play our music games," remarked Helen magnanimously. "Every day, after breakfast, we'll meet on the veranda, from now on. By the way," turning to her brother, "when do the Scotts arrive?"

"Some time to-day, I think."

"Then to-morrow morning Phil can come to us if he likes; to-day I'll show the children the new toy."

Helen was a firm believer in musical toys. Small tin trumpets, harmonicas, little and big

—in fact any invention yielding a musical tone which a child could imitate—was welcome. She had much success in using them with her “infant class,” as she laughingly called the small children she taught in the city, and who, through her patient care and love, were becoming musically wide awake at an early stage in their career. She found these toys of great assistance in awakening the sense of differences of sound and pitch, and in arousing the child’s interest in tones. One of the most useful of such instruments she had found to be the xylophone, and that is what her brother had brought her from the city last evening. It usually was an admiration to the little people, and prepared them in a measure for the time when they should begin regular piano lessons. For they could learn to play the xylophone themselves, and could discover with it many combinations of tones.

True to her promise, she proceeded to the veranda soon after breakfast. The children were there already, examining the curious object, and trying to make it “tinkle,” as Dorothy said.

“I’ve told you,” began Helen, “that we use some of the letters of the alphabet to make music out of. You have learned your alphabet

with Mamma, so tell me the first seven letters, Dorothy.”

Dorothy counted off seven letters on her chubby fingers, her brother watching her narrowly to see that she made no mistake. She came through triumphantly, and then he recited them in his turn.

“Now,” said Helen, “I’m going to write those seven letters on these brass keys here, so you won’t forget them.” And with a big blue pencil she wrote the following letters: *C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C*. “Yesterday we learned three of these letters, with the help of my ‘singing stick’—you remember the *A, B, C*? When we sang them backward, Dorothy thought it sounded like *Three Blind Mice*, didn’t you, my Dodo?”

The child nodded.

“We have more letters now, you see; we have seven. And you see, too, that I didn’t begin with *A*, but with *C*. Really there are eight, for I have written *C* twice. I’ll play them for you—once—twice—three times—and out.

“Harold, you might see if you can play them too.” She put the stick into the little fellow’s hand and guided the stroke, so that it sounded very well indeed.

“Now, Dorothy, try and see if you can do it as well as Harold.”

The teacher saw they were both deeply interested, and continued:

“Harold, see if you can sing these sounds as sister plays them; Dodo will tap them very evenly, and you will sing them just the very best you can—so—so—— That is very good indeed. Now change about: let sister sing and you play”—which worked even better.

“I’ll put the new piano away for the present,” soon remarked Helen, not wishing to have the novelty worn off the new toy the very first day. “To-morrow morning we’ll try this game again, and bye and bye I’ll play for you on the real piano.”

Helen’s intention was to make these half hours of music training so enticing and full of interest that the children would never tire of them, and would ask for more when the time came to leave off. So far she had succeeded better than she had expected, and felt that a whole summer of such “play-drill” ought to bring excellent results. “If the mothers themselves would only do something of this kind for their children,” she thought, “we Americans might ultimately become the most musical nation on earth. There’s Marianne, now,—she

could easily give half an hour a day to the musical training of her children. She thinks she has so much to do, and of course she has; but she could do a little in this line in place of some of that embroidery she seems to be so fond of. And then she might take up her own music. An hour a day would be something at least, and what a musical atmosphere it would make for her family. She says she loves music dearly and would like to study it again and learn modern ideas. If she only would do it! I've offered to help her, but I shall not urge it; she must come to me of her own accord."

Harold and Dorothy, freshly dressed and looking like the sweet little human flowers that they were, came upon Aunty Helen as she was looking over some new music at the piano in the parlor late that afternoon. Dorothy threw soft arms about her neck, while Harold leaned on her knee.

"You said you'd play for us, Aunty dear."

"And so I will, sweetheart. Tell me how you like this," and turning around on the piano stool, she played the pretty *Melodie in C*, of Thomé.

"Isn't that a pretty song? Now listen to it

again and see whether the tune is in the right hand or the left.”

Aided by their drill of the day before, the children had no trouble in locating the melody as in the right hand.

“I’ll play the tune alone now, without any other notes at all; you can both try to sing it as I play it.”

Encouraged by Helen, who sang with them, the children were able to carry the tune quite nicely. The first strain, which repeated forms one page, was gone over a number of times till it grew familiar. Then Helen played a simple, lively air, bidding the children march around the room and beat time to the music by clapping their hands. This they soon learned to do, and entered into the game with keen enjoyment; first Harold was leader and then Dorothy was at the head. Finally Helen called a halt, saying they had enough for one day.

“Oh, please, Aunt Helen, can’t we do it some more?” they both pleaded.

“Yes, indeed; but to-morrow morning.”

CHAPTER V

THE QUARTETTE

IN a day or two the veranda morning class was augmented by a couple of new members, for Phil Scott had joined it and had brought his little cousin Edith Gray, who was staying with them for the summer, while her parents were abroad. Phil was a year older than the twins, and a manly little fellow, tall for his age. His cousin was a few months his elder—a beautiful child, very fair, with golden hair and deep blue eyes; she made an extreme contrast to the olive-skinned, dark-eyed Phil. Her manners were pretty and gentle. The newcomers made excellent companions for the Richmond twins, and all four were soon inseparable.

Miss Richmond was at first somewhat uncertain as to whether the addition of two more would be of benefit to her little pair, but she soon found the new boy and girl entered quite as much into the spirit of the game as did the

twins. Harold spoke truly when he declared he "was sure Phil would like music when he knew how nice it was," for the little chap took to it directly, and seemed to have a very good ear for sounds.

As the Richmond veranda was larger and pleasanter than the one belonging to the other cottage, the music half-hours were always given there, and the two children from the Brown House came up the hill to join the music games at the White House as regularly as the sun rose.

The first morning they arrived, Miss Richmond asked Harold and Dorothy to tell the little guests what the music games were like, she herself remaining upstairs to give them the opportunity to talk without restraint. As her windows were directly above the veranda, the sound of childish voices floated up to her, and she could hear much of what was said.

"Music's real nice. We like it, don't we, Dodo?" began Harold.

"'Deed we do," assured his sister.

"I don't know whether I'll like it or not," said Phil, skeptically. "I don't b'lieve I want to play the pianner, 'cause then I'll have to stay

in the house every afternoon and practise, the way Jim has to."

"But this kind of music is different," put in Dorothy. "We hear what the birds sing—and the grasshoppers—and things——"

"And Aunt Helen plays nice pieces to us on the piano, and we listen, and guess."

"Guess what?" asked Edith.

"Oh, guess what the tune is, you know," said Dorothy.

"And if it's in the left hand or the right hand," finished Harold.

"We'll get her to take us down to the Dell, 'cause there the birds sing buful," said Dorothy eagerly.

"The birds sing here too," and Edith pointed out one hopping on the topmost branch of the lilac-tree near the veranda.

"Aunt Helen shows us how to listen to them. Do you know how to listen to the birds?" Dorothy's voice was a bit doubtful.

"Why, of course! Anybody knows that," answered Edith.

"You have to see whether the sound goes up or down, and how many sounds there are in the tune," instructed Dorothy.

"Oh," said Edith, who began to think there

was more to mere listening than she had ever thought of before.

“Here comes Aunt Helen now,” cried Harold. “And—oh, goody, she’s got the playing machine!”

The quartette gathered around Helen as she appeared with the xylophone, which she placed on the little table. The newcomers had never seen such an instrument, and were at once eagerly attentive.

Helen began by tapping *C* several times, then *B* and *D*; after which she asked which tone was above and which tone was below *C*. The twins had no trouble with this test, and the others soon learned the difference between “up” and “down.” Helen noted with joy that the little guests were apt to hear; she hoped they would be quick to understand.

She explained the sounds they were about to hear, had the letters recited forward and backward, and then tapped the five letters *C*, *D*, *E*, *F*, *G*. The children listened and sang the tones to the letters, both up and down. After this came the “Skipping Game,” which means that you skip around among the five notes, singing as the letters are called for. Then each one guesses what note is heard, as they are tapped one at a time.

Next they went indoors to the piano, and listened to the same five notes, which they could recognize in almost every instance. Then Helen played *The Happy Farmer*, *The Little Bird*, and a new piece called *The Beetle's Buzz*. She explained what each piece meant, and counseled her young listeners to have alert ears, in order to notice the sounds made by beetles and other insects.

After this there was marching and clapping to some lively tunes played upon the piano. The marching went with more zest now that there were four instead of two in line. They each took turns in being at the head.

Helen was thoroughly pleased with the new class, and felt that the coming weeks held many possibilities.

"This afternoon, children, I'll take you all down to the Dell, and we'll show Phil and Edith all the surprises we found there the other day. There's one surprise, however, that you didn't find out when we were there, but you shall discover it to-day."

"Oh, goody, goody!" cried the twins.

CHAPTER VI

THE SINGING WATER

TOWARD four o'clock Helen, with a child clasping each hand, sauntered down the "big road" on the way to the Dell. She stopped at the brown cottage to get the valiant Scotts, who were all ready to start, and together they made their way over the grassy turf to where the great trees guarded the magic circle, through which the tiny brook wound its crystal way.

"We'll invite the birds to visit us," remarked Helen as she took some crumbs from her small hand-bag and spread them on the grass in the center of the space. Then seating herself at the foot of her favorite tree, with the children grouped about her, she waited for the feathered guests to alight.

But the birds were shy, and seemed to prefer to stay on the branches of tall trees than to risk themselves on the green below. At last a couple of sparrows ventured down. They pecked

away vigorously at the crumbs, keeping up meanwhile their animated chatter and twitter.

"What do you 'spose they're saying?" whispered Dorothy.

"Wouldn't it be nice if we knew," answered Edith in the same low tone.

"Once upon a time there was a young hero who learned to understand bird language," said Helen. "He was a very brave fellow, and was never afraid of anything nor anybody. He was not a bit frightened when he had to go and fight with a dreadful dragon, that was the terror of the whole land. No one was ever able to get near enough to the dragon to kill it, for it was so very dreadful that fire and smoke came out of its mouth when any one approached. A little bird tried to tell the hero about the dragon, and how to kill it, but he didn't know bird language, so he couldn't understand. However, he was very brave, as I said, and went boldly into the great cave where the monster lay puffing and snorting. He wasn't a bit afraid of the fire and smoke that the creature poured out of its mouth, but killed it on the spot, with his good sword. When all was over he wiped off his sword, and in some way a drop of the dragon's blood touched his

tongue. When the little bird sang to him again he found he could understand everything."

"How funny—that he could really understand," said Edith, a little dreamily, as though she were mentally picturing the young hero, and the great dragon.

"The brave fellow's name was Siegfried," continued Helen. "He made a 'singing stick' out of a small reed, and tried to call and imitate the bird. Perhaps Mr. Robin will come to us if I call him with my pipe," and taking her little silver pipe from her belt, she blew a single clear note.

"That's *C*," cried Dorothy.

"Sh—sh——"

A robin flew down from the tree, and with little short runs over the green, sang a peculiar song.

"They say that song means rain, children; Mr. Robin thinks he can bring it. Now each one of you listen to his call—see how he makes it, and then try to repeat it to me."

They all tried, and though they didn't succeed very well, the effort helped to cultivate their growing sense for tone.

"Come, let us go a few steps farther—just where the brook eddies round that tree-trunk."

The children followed.

Aunt Helen seated herself quite close to the root of the tree, and seemed to listen to something. What did it mean? The children looked at her and then at one another, wondering.

At last Helen raised her head.

“Yes, the water is singing to-day. Keep very still, all of you, and tell me if you hear anything?”

At first they could distinguish nothing more than the chirp of the birds overhead and the hum of insect life about them; but soon the faint tinkling, rippling sound of water could be separated from other sounds about them.

“Do you hear, children? Some of the tones are very slow, while others are quite quick; you see they’re not all the same. And I hear a real tune.” She sang a little snatch of melody. “Who hears it like that?”

Edith and Dorothy thought they did; the boys were doubtful, but agreed that the tiny streamlet was a splendid place to sail a toy boat, and they meant to bring theirs the very next time they came.

“The water doesn’t always sing the same tune, as it drips over the roots of this old tree here,” explained Helen; “for each time I come I hear a different melody. But aren’t you all

glad to know the water has a voice and can sing too, as well as the birds and bees? I believe your ears are opening to the music of nature—indeed I know they are.

“Do you know,” she went on, “there was once a boy—he became a great musician when he grew up—who learned all by himself to listen to the water song and the bird notes just as we are trying to do. Would you like to hear how he did it?”

“Oh, please tell us,” they all cried at once.

“Very well. Let’s make ourselves comfy here at the foot of the tree, while I tell you the story as it is found in my little red book.”

They gathered about her on the soft turf, as Helen, leaning against the rugged, mossy tree-trunk, brought out the *Little Red Book*, and told them the story of Paul and how he started to become a great musician.

CHORISTERS OF THE AIR

It was a glorious afternoon in July. The sunshine lay warm and bright on meadow and upland; a group of tall trees cast violet shadows across the winding white road and over the green fields beyond; some sheep were grazing over on the slope; a meadow lark flung out its

triumphant note as it sailed far up into the blue.

The boy Paul, returning from an errand to the village a mile or so away, had thrown himself down to rest on the soft green turf, under a tree. A brook tinkled at the foot of the tree, and wound its way through the meadow. How it sang and laughed—the tiny streamlet—as it tumbled over the brown stones that stood in its way, which caused the water to form miniature cascades and eddies along its course. Its musical murmurs formed a soothing background to the boy's day-dream.

He was thinking of the story he had found in a cast-off paper he had picked up, which told of a boy, poor as himself, who had a great love for music. He had taught himself to play and to write music. This boy was so eager to learn that he used to study and copy music at night, by the light of the moon, as, under the stern family rule, he was not even allowed to have a tallow dip.

“I would have done just as he did, if I had been in his place, and could hear plenty of music, as he could,” mused Paul. “How beautiful to know how to play, and how to write music for others to play or sing. Some day perhaps I can do both; but when or how can I

learn?" His thoughts turned to the simple, homely cottage, bare of everything that suggested music, and to the hard struggle of his parents to make a meager living.

As he lay there communing with himself, he became gradually conscious that the musical murmur of the brook was weaving itself into the warp of his day-dream. There really was a melody in the song; as it rose and fell there was an ever-recurring higher note that tinkled like a tiny silver bell. The boy roused and listened intently; the longer he listened the more tones he discovered. Such fairy music! It was exquisitely beautiful.

And now athwart this silvery melody of rippling water shot the whirr—whirr—whirr of a friendly grasshopper, sitting on a leaf near by. His note was answered by the stronger call of the locust farther away. The boy noticed the difference in quality and pitch between the two, and tried to hum the tones softly and imitate each in turn. Some noisy little sparrows were arguing out an important question among the branches above his head. Their chirpings added new tones to the nature-music.

His sense of hearing seemed suddenly to have awakened, and was becoming more acute each moment. Beyond the sounds he had al-

ready discovered, it seemed as if the very air itself was vibrant with the hum of many insect voices. They were so delicate and faint, one could scarcely locate or tell what they were, but they made a soft pulsing, throbbing background for all the other voices.

Then the meadow lark rose again and sang its sweet, triumphant notes as it sailed away into the blue.

Paul started to his feet, thoroughly awake and alive.

"The air is full of music—I can *hear* it," he cried. "Why can I not learn music right here on the meadow, and by the brook? Oh, how glad I am I can hear it!" He shouted aloud for the very joy of it. "I'm going to learn music right here, right here, for everything sings—the air is full of songs."

Where to begin first? There was the brook with its sweet, tinkling tune. There were different tones in it and he set to work to find what they were. He crouched down and held his curly head close to the water, listening intently. Soon he began to hum the sounds he heard. There were five or six, and they went up and down, higher and lower, and made a little melody. Some tones were longer and some shorter; he noticed that too. Soon he

had learned the water tune quite correctly. It was rather a monotonous song, constantly repeating itself over and over. Paul changed the position of a stone in the bed of the tiny streamlet, so that the water at that spot would drip with a little more force. Now the song of the brook was louder and more varied. He discovered a new tune the water was singing, and by listening carefully he found in what way it differed from the first song, which he had already learned.

The boy jumped to his feet again, and clapped his hands. It seemed as though he had really trapped the Water Nixie and had learned her secrets.

“I just learned them by listening with all my might,” he explained long afterward; “anybody who knows how to listen can hear them too, only I did not know how before.”

Shadows had lengthened over the meadows and the sweet, faint fragrance of the sunset hour filled the air, as the boy turned his steps toward the humble home not far away. His face was bright with happy thoughts over the discoveries of the afternoon. And in the nighttime, as he lay in his cot under the eaves and heard the rain drip, drip, and patter on the roof, he listened for the rain song, and soon

learned to know the tones and guessed its meaning.

Every afternoon after this through the long, long days, Paul was playing his listening game in field and wood, or by the brook under the great tree, for it was vacation time. He was soon acquainted with the sounds made by different insects, the bees, the katydids, grasshoppers, locusts and other winged things. The trees, too, made sweet, fairylike music when the slow, warm wind passed through them on summer afternoons; and when storms broke over them they could rustle quite harshly and sharply. They really had many different voices.

The most beautiful music of all came from the birds, and Paul spent many hours studying the various tones. There was the English oriole, with its "rain song," and its "fair weather lay"; also our own robin redbreast, with its peculiar note. He learned to know the plaintive tones of the whippoorwill, the call of the blue jay, and the blackbird's note. Best of all he discovered a haunt of the wonderful hermit thrush. He used to steal quietly toward it at sundown—but so quietly that the brown-coated little songster on the slender twig was undisturbed. What a glorious song

it was that poured from the small creature's tiny throat! Such heavenly sweetness and beauty; such ecstasy of joy and aspiration! It seemed to the boy that each of those marvelous, bell-like tones was engraved ineffaceably in his memory, to be reproduced when he was alone with himself and could practise them. They appeared long after, when he became a great composer, and wrote nature-music.

Paul realized that he was actually learning to hear: his ears had been opened to recognize the various sounds to be heard all about him. This ability did not come in a moment; worthwhile knowledge seldom does; it came through careful study of the common sounds one may hear any day, in field and wood. "Anybody who listens can learn these things too," he used to say, quite modestly.

Would you like to know what happened to this boy who had taught himself to hear? One joy and reward after another came to him. A lady, a great lover of music herself, had met him several times in her walks and had been struck by his radiant face and sweet voice. For Paul, through his efforts to imitate the tones of nature and the songs of the birds, had rendered his voice soft and musical; it was not at all loud and rough, as some boys delight to

make theirs. This lady had questioned him and had learned his aspirations for music study. Something put it into her mind to help him.

One bleak December day Paul was trudging home from school, whistling cheerily to keep his spirits up and the cold out. The trees were bare now and shook their gaunt branches sadly in the cold wind. Birds had long ago sought a warmer country; but still there were always sounds to hear, of one kind or another.

When he reached the little cottage where his parents lived, a great surprise awaited him—a wonderful thing had happened. There, at one side of the little sitting-room stood a beautiful new piano. The rich lady had sent it. A music book had come with it, and stood open on the desk.

As you may well guess, Paul was almost beside himself with joy. When he became a little calmer, he realized that here was enough work ahead to fill all the long winter evenings; now he could learn to play the piano and to write music. And he did his best with both. Later, when he had made the very most of this gift by himself, the opportunity came to study with a great artist, to learn how to compose, then

to travel, to see many lands and peoples, and at last to become himself a great musician.

It may be said that Paul was well prepared to study music, for he had first learned to hear. Every one who wishes to study music should follow the same plan. The fact is that many people try to study music who cannot hear at all. They are not really deaf, but they have not learned to hear; they cannot tell how far one tone is from another, or whether it is higher or lower; in other words they know next to nothing about pitch and quality of sound. If they play the piano, they simply try to reproduce the printed signs of the piece on the keyboard, and never think of the beautiful tones they might make if they could only listen and hear.

Paul had learned to hear in those long summer days. He knew the relative pitch of sounds, for he had copied them from the black-bird, the thrush, and the brook. He listened to the tones of the piano just as he had listened to the bird voices, and he tried to make the piano tones just as beautiful.

What he did any bright boy or girl can do. It is no use to study music unless you learn to *hear* at the same time.

CHAPTER VII

THE TAPPING GAME

THE next morning soon after breakfast, the children found Aunt Helen at the piano, while near by stood a low table, and four small chairs of just the right height for the little class. On the table lay four bright-colored lead pencils.

“Oh, look what Aunt Helen’s got for us,” cried Dorothy, who was the first to notice the new pencils.

“Two red ones, and two blues,” said Harold, examining them. “I want a red one.”

“Wait, laddie, till the girls have chosen theirs—we must always be polite.”

“I like the blue best,” said Dorothy.

“So do I,” asserted Edith.

“You see, boys, you will get what you want if you are just a little patient about it,” remarked Helen. Then she continued:

“Now to-day, we are going to play the Tapping Game, and I’ll show you what it is. Lay your right arm on the table and hold the pencil with your thumb, second and third fingers, like

this. Now make four little taps, so,—do you see? Count 1, 2, 3, 4, and tap the pencil every time you speak a number. Let's see who will do it the best. Don't hold the pencil so tightly, Dorothy—it will cramp your hand and make your arm stiff. Harold, make nice even beats—yours are not steady. Phil, a little quicker with the taps; yours are slower than the others. Yours are very good, Edith. All together now—“one, two, three, four!” And the ends of the red and blue pencils came down smartly on the table with reasonable regularity.

“That's very well, children, for a beginning. We'll do it four times more. How many will that make, Edith?”

“Four times four are sixteen,” repeated Edith, while the others looked at her admiringly.

“Edith is learning her multiplication table, I see; it comes in handy when we want to study music,” remarked Helen.

“Count one, two, three, four,—four times, and tap evenly with your pencils for each count.”

Four serious, eager little faces showed that each one was trying to do the very best possible, to make the work perfect.

“That will do, children. Now you can march

around the room while I play, as I'm sure you'll feel the music in your feet; you can count four as long as the music lasts."

This was great fun; the music was bright and gay, the rhythm distinctly marked, and the children caught the idea quickly. It soon became easy to obey the command to clap hands every time they said "one," and the exhilaration of marching to the lively tune made their eyes shine.

"You are famous little soldiers, and I see you really feel the music in your feet," laughed Helen, as she stopped playing. "Come back to the table for a moment, and beat time with your pencils, while I play the tune you have just been marching to."

This didn't seem very difficult. Helen simply played the marching tune, and they soon learned to make their pencils beat to fit the tones they heard on the piano.

"You see, children, I am only playing the melody, for I have left out all the other notes. Even if I didn't play the melody at all, you could still beat it because the tune would be in your mind, and the tapping on the table would be the *rhythm* of the piece. Rhythm is what is left over after we've taken away the tune and the other notes. That little word

'rhythm' is one I want you to remember; we'll say it over several times, and I am going to ask for it each day, so that you shall not forget. Now, to finish off, I'll play you the three little pieces you have learned to listen to, and you can tell me the name of each as I finish it."

"I wish you would visit my infant class, Marianne," remarked Helen that evening, as they were all sitting on the veranda. "The children are really making a good deal of progress—I am surprised myself at their quickness. Perhaps I am too sanguine, but I see such possibilities ahead."

"I certainly will come and listen; they all seem to enjoy it, and I verily believe nothing would keep them away from 'the game,' as they call it. I heard Dorothy explaining things to her favorite doll, Bella. She took Bella's white kid fingers and made them play the eight keys of the middle octave on the piano; these she sang, one after another, and told Bella to do the same. Sometimes she said Bella made a mistake, for which she was accordingly chastised, and made to do it all over again. It was really too cute for anything."

"Harold has caught the fever too," said his father; "for I heard him beating his drum

quite regularly, and even trying to accent the first of every four taps.”

“Yes, they’re just beginning to learn what rhythm is. At this rate they will have quite a fund of preliminary musical knowledge by the end of the summer. Already they are familiar with the most obvious sounds in nature—the voices of the birds, the insects and the brook, and they are now beginning to know the piano tunes also. Ear training cannot be accomplished in a few days, or even in a month; it’s a growth, and for this reason ought to be started at the earliest possible moment.”

“I wonder why I wasn’t taught music in some such way as this,” reflected Marianne. “My teacher took me to the piano right away, before I knew what was going to happen to me. Such and such keys, I was told, were called by such and such letters, and I was bidden to put my fingers on them, though I was not told just how to do this, or how to hold my hands or what movements to make. You can imagine the result. Later on, when I went to a good teacher, didn’t I have the time of my life correcting my faults!”

“Did your ‘good teacher’ explain how music is made—tell you how to make scales, form chords and all such things?” asked Helen.

“I can’t say he did; it was all interpretation and expression with him.”

“But our children, young as they are, will soon know how a common chord, or triad, is made, and will be able to recite the seven that belong to the key of *C*, at least, and to play them too.”

“You don’t mean to tell me those kiddies know how to make chords?” Marianne’s look and tone expressed her astonishment. She had the general aversion for anything connected with “harmony,” as a subject too dry and abstruse for ordinary mortals to cope with.

“Why not? You give them blocks to play with, and before long they can put together little words; a little later you give them maps cut up into bits, which they learn to fit together. You explain what the pieces are and what they mean, and pretty soon the children have played the game enough to know something about the topography of the United States. I don’t see why they shouldn’t learn about sounds and how to combine them in the same way—just naturally. Of course the children can’t guess they have already acquired greater ability to hear and distinguish tones than many who have studied the piano—for years, I was going to say, but I don’t want to

shock you. Perhaps I had better only say that by the end of the summer, I expect they will have acquired such ability."

"Well, Helen, all I can say is, you are a wonder. Maybe the children know more about sound now than I do."

"I think they do," returned Helen calmly; "but there's nothing wonderful about that—it's just common sense. Music appeals first to the ear, yet most people begin to play without ever learning to hear."

"Then you don't take your pupils to the piano when you begin to give them regular music lessons?" asked her brother, who had been quietly puffing at his cigar and thoughtfully attentive to the talk.

"Not to *play* on the piano, but to find keys and tones. First they learn to hear, then learn to move their fingers properly away from the piano before putting them on the keyboard."

"It sounds most sensible indeed."

"I'll soon show you what the children have learned so far. Give me one more week, and then—— But don't expect wonders, for I haven't yet discovered a genius among them—and you know they are not taking music lessons."

CHAPTER VIII

AN INTERLUDE

“HELEN, do come down on the veranda; it is so cool and delightful there. You’ve been writing away for the last two hours at least,” said Marianne, coming to Helen’s door on a warm afternoon. “Mrs. Scott is here. We are going to begin a new book and want you to join us.”

“Yes, I’ll come gladly, for I’ve just finished my discourse. Look——” and she gleefully held up a handful of sheets covered with writing. “You remember the club I belong to, composed of pianists and teachers—all workers. I agreed to furnish several short papers for our meetings next winter, and thought I would get them up during vacation, for time slips away so when the season’s rush is on that it is hard to settle down to such work.”

“Why not read some of the papers to us now, and we will tell you whether we like them.”

“On the principle of ‘trying it on the dog?’” laughed her sister; then she continued more soberly:

“If you can stand them, I shall be glad to read one or two of these little sketches, and have your honest opinion.”

When greetings and explanations were over and each had seated herself comfortably, Miss Richmond began:

“For our club, of which I have told you, I am going to take up the subject of listening, first to sounds and then to rhythms; I’ve written them both out since I have been here, but will only inflict one on you to-day. I have called it:

Listening to the Tones about Us

A great man once wrote: “You must listen as though listening were your very life.”

The fact is that the ability to listen is one of the greatest gifts we can cultivate. It is like a sixth sense, for it opens the door to so many pleasant things; we are twice as wide awake about everything in life when we are awake to sounds and tones which are to be heard about us.

Let us sit quietly for a few moments and really listen to the sounds to which we gener-

ally give no heed. A church bell in a neighboring street tolls slowly; the silver chime of the clock has just sounded the hour; the telephone has jangled, and a moment ago the doorbell rang, which called forth a quick bark of inquiry from the little pet terrier, stretched out on the hearth rug. What tones do these sounds give out? Did we ever think of this before? Some people are speaking together—one voice is soft, low and musical, one gay and happy, another somewhat harsh and shrill. Outside in the street a newsboy is calling papers, a carriage drives by, or a vender is crying his wares. Above all the rest there is the canary in his gilded cage, who is pouring forth a stream of marvelous melody from his little ruffled throat. Indeed the air is filled with various sounds, tones, voices, to which most of us have grown so accustomed that we seldom think about them. Or if we notice them at all, it is only to connect them with other things, and never to attend to what tones each particular kind of object gives out. Once in a century, perhaps, a child's sense of sound is so exquisitely keen and perceptive that he can tell what tonality the canary is singing in—as little Mozart could when he declared the bird sang in *G sharp*. We think this very wonderful, but

it would not cause so much surprise if we ourselves were more accustomed to heeding the sounds to be heard everywhere about us.

If we could only learn to associate the various common sounds of the everyday world with the musical tones they simulate, this of itself would help us to become more musical. If we could distinguish in the canary's ecstatic song some special notes and would try to find them on the piano, or if we would notice in what way the tones of his song proceed, whether higher or lower, or what kind of intervals he uses, that is to say the pitch of the various tones, all this would help us to enjoy more keenly a piano recital or a symphony concert.

But many people pass over and neglect these common, everyday voices. We often hear it said by this person or that: "I have no ear for music," as though this were an incurable malady, or even something to be a bit proud of. In reality they have no ear because they have never learned to listen; they could easily have ears if they would take the trouble to open them.

Learning to listen, then, is where music study should begin. Every tone you play, when you begin to take piano lessons, should be listened to and sung many times with the

voice. Five or ten minutes of the hour's practise time can be given to special listening exercises, such as playing single tones in the middle of the keyboard, then making them with the voice; naming the notes when playing, without looking at them, or with the keys covered. I have known people who thought they had "no ear," or believed they were "tone deaf," who learned in this way to know tones and chords, and in time became good players and musicians. It has been discovered that absolute pitch, which is the ability to locate a tone correctly as soon as heard, and which was always supposed to be a natural gift, can, with the right sort of effort, be acquired. And if this is true, we can all become musical, if we will. Try to learn the correct pitch of a single tone—Middle C, for instance. Listen to it—sing it—think it. Whenever you pass the piano, hum this tone, and then test it by playing the key, to see how near you came to it. In a little while you will acquire that tone as an inner mental possession—you will know it anywhere. Other tones can be learned in the same way.

"You must know," Helen stopped a moment and looked up at the ladies, "that outsiders are

admitted to these musical evenings of our club; so the papers we prepare must be somewhat general in scope; I mean to say they must not be too technical, but must appeal to the general listener as well as to ourselves."

"I think we have followed you perfectly so far," said Mrs. Scott, "though I dare say we are among the people who have never learned to listen; it seems to me a most interesting subject."

Helen continued with her paper:

As you go on in piano study, always try to advance at the same time in the art of hearing and listening; for we are never at an end with it. Even though it may be only scales and exercises you are playing, make them as smooth and beautiful as the finest pieces in the world. But you cannot do this unless you listen to every note you play. And when you listen in this way to the exercises and try to make them like pieces, you will gain the ability to play real pieces more intelligently and musically.

I have kept the secret of how to learn to listen until now, though perhaps you have guessed it from the start. It is contained in the single word, *attention*, or its stronger counterpart, *concentration*. If you are not at-

tending to the tones of all kinds which the atmosphere holds, you will surely not hear them; if you do not hear them, of course you cannot know what they are. Through attention you learn to hear them, and through concentration you learn to know them, to reproduce them and to memorize them. For memory plays a large part in the cultivation of the ear, since if we listen with attention to a tone when we hear it for the first time, we are likely to know it again the next time we hear it. So our knowledge of tones can grow daily. But—I repeat it—attention is at the bottom of it all; attention is the golden key that will unlock the treasures of sound.

If you can only acquire this little key, what pleasures will be yours! Think of all the sweet sounds in nature; think of all the beautiful music there is to hear. Your enjoyment of all is increased a hundredfold if you have learned how to listen, how to find the themes and melodies and how to follow them through the composition.

You can see now how valuable the art of listening can become, if you will strive to secure it. It cannot be acquired in a moment, for it has to grow. But it can be begun at any moment, and can be carried on without limit.

It will help to make you intelligent and awake to the world of Tone Magic.

Helen looked up as she dropped the sheets in her lap, and saw by the faces of her listeners that they felt with her. Mrs. Scott was the first to speak.

“I am fully in sympathy with your campaign for better hearing, and seeing too. The subject recalls a conundrum I heard lately: ‘Why are music pupils like corn and potatoes?’ The answer was: ‘Though they have both eyes and ears, they neither see nor hear!’ ”

A general laugh followed this little sally.

“That they fail to see and hear is, I suppose, because, as George Eliot says, ‘the best of us walk about well wadded with stupidity.’ That’s why I think music is one of the most important things a child can study, for it wakes up so many sides at once.”

When Mrs. Scott reached her own gate, a little later, she discovered Edith curled up in a shady corner of the piazza, busy with pencil and paper, her violet eyes full of serious thought. Going over to the child she saw that the important document on which the little girl was spending so much effort was a letter to her mother. So she seated herself in an easy

chair and took up some linen work, well knowing she would be appealed to for consultation, advice, and correction. As a combined result, the following letter was produced:

Dearest Mamma:

This is my second letter. In the other one I told you about the house and my pretty room—and all the corners and pantries where Phil and I can play hide-and-seek. Uncle Harry takes us rides most every afternoon. The big gray cat has four kittens—I'm to have the prettiest one to take home.

Every morning we go up to the white house, and we play the music games. Dorothy's Aunt Helen tells us about the bird-song and the water-song, and lots of things. I can *hear* a whole lot. She plays on the piano nice pieces, and we sing them, and we march and beat time. She tells us stories too, about the music men that made the pretty tunes. I like it—so does Phil. I wish you would let me take music lessons soon—as soon as I come home; will you, Mother dear? I hope you and dear Papa are well.

With love,

Your little

EDITH.

P. S.—Aunt Mary told me how to spell the hard words in this letter.

CHAPTER IX

TRIANGLES

“Now, children, this morning we shall learn something very wonderful—and that is, how to make a chord in music. A chord is made of three notes, and we call it a ‘triad,’ which means three. You can write on your papers the music alphabet letters which you have already learned. Make them first like this: *C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G*. How many letters have you written? Yes, there are twelve. Now make some little triangles on your paper, in this way——



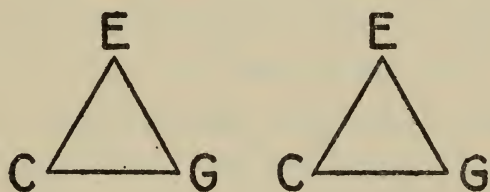
“See, I will show you,” and Helen carefully directed the eager fingers until a triangle could be drawn with reasonable correctness.

“We will now make a very nice, perfect triangle, and put a music letter at each corner of

it. There are three corners to your triangle, so you can use just three letters.

“Begin with *C*, and put that at the left-hand corner of the triangle. Skip *D*, and write *E* at the top, skip *F*, and put *G* at the right-hand corner of the triangle. Now, all do your very best and then we will compare them.”

This is what Helen asked them to make



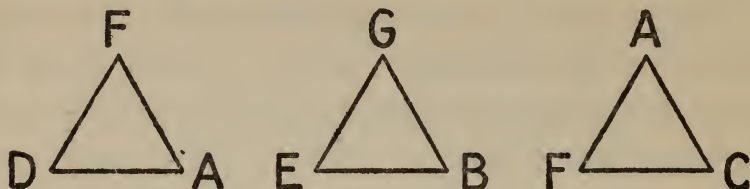
After giving them plenty of time to write the chord triangle, she inquired: “What letters have you, Edith?”

“I have *C*, *E*, *G*,” answered the little girl.

“That’s quite right. I’ll play them on the toy piano; you can listen to them and then sing them.”

The other triangles were now inspected; some of them had to be improved or corrected. When all could make the triangle as well as Edith had done, and quite understood how the triad was formed, they were asked to write the next one, beginning with the letter *D*, taking three letters, but always skipping a letter be-

tween each of the three. Dorothy had to make the "D triangle," which was like this:



Harold had to begin with *E*, so his letters were *E, G, B*; while Phil was told to write the "F triangle," so his turned out to be *F, A, C*.

After a few moments more spent in guessing the names of the five tones, from *C* to *G*, as they were sounded on the xylophone, tapping the triads and singing them, some time-beating on the table, marching and listening to several little pieces played on the piano, they were dismissed to their play by Aunt Helen. But the children seemed to want more; they clung to her and brought her out to the veranda with them.

"Please, Aunt Helen, tell us about the children you teach in the city," urged Dorothy, who was apt to be spokesman.

"What children, dear?"

"Why, the 'infant class' you know," said the child earnestly; "you told Mamma you had some babies."

"Did you hear me say that? Well, well!

Do you really want to hear—and do the others?”

“Yes, yes we do—Edith does, and you do, don’t you, Phil and Harold? Let’s sit close. Oh, wait just a minute till I get Bella—she has to hear it too.”

Dorothy ran indoors to fetch her doll and soon hastened back to the group. Mamma, looking out of the doorway and seeing the pretty picture, brought her sewing and sat near.

“So you want to hear about my babies,” began Aunt Helen. “Well, I will tell you about my first babies—the very first class I ever had. For up to the time I took them I had never taught young children, as all my pupils were advanced players or teachers. But one day a lady came to me who wanted her little girl to begin music. I told her to find three others, so we might form a class. It was not at all easy to find three other children of just the right age, who were congenial, and who were ready to start their music study. At last, however, two other little girls were discovered, and the day was set for them to begin.”

“What were the children like, Aunt Helen, and what were their names?” interrupted Dorothy, always curious about names.

“One had a name like yours, Dorothy. She was a slim little girl, with dark hair and eyes; she was fond of wearing red ribbons in her hair, so I called her the Rose. Annie was fair, with lily-white skin, pink cheeks and golden hair, like our Edith here; she was the Lily of the class. Dorothy’s great friend, Margaret, was the third. She had long brown curls and brown eyes to match, so I named her the Violet.

“I had told the mothers of the children that I wanted them to come to the lessons of the class, and see what we did, so they could help the children at home—between the lessons.

“Never shall I forget that first lesson! When I arrived, the children were all there; the mothers were all there too, besides several friends and relations of the new pupils. It was evident one and all expected to see and hear something unique and entertaining.

“The children were in a hilarious mood. The Lily danced and skipped about the room, saying—or rather singing—‘Oh, I’m going to take music lessons—music lessons; I’m so happy, I can hardly wait to begin.’

“They soon grew quiet, when I had them sit down at a table, on which each child was told to place her right hand and arm, so I could show them the different parts and joints, and

then how to press down firmly on the table, as though they were going through to the other side of it; then how to relax the pressure, and let the hand lie quite limp and heavy, as though it had no life in it at all. When they understood this, and could do it somewhat correctly, they were then told to draw the ends of the fingers along the table till the hand stood up in good shape, all ready to play the piano. They got the position quite nicely, first with one hand and then with the other. They seemed to enjoy this, for you know all children like to hold their hands prettily. After this work at the table, I went to the piano, while the children stood about me. I sounded a few of the middle notes to see how well they could hear. The Lily couldn't seem to hear any difference between the sounds I played; you might have thought she was 'tone deaf'; indeed, her mother told me she was. But I was sure she could be taught to hear, and she really learned to do it later, though on the day I am telling you of, she couldn't hear whether a tone went up or down—whether it was higher or lower. The Rose had much better ears, and the Violet's were best of all.

“Well, after they had listened to a few of the middle tones of the piano, and had tried

to sing them, they recited the first seven letters of the alphabet, and found the places for them on the keyboard, just as you are learning to do. Then we went back to the table, and I showed them how to make the movements in some very simple finger exercises. They all seemed to find everything fascinating, and promised to do all the little exercises at the piano and on the table, each day. I was so anxious for them to make a good beginning, to be interested enough to practise and also to pay good attention in the lessons, that I felt I ought to offer the children some special inducement. So I told them they should have a gold star for a well prepared lesson, and a green star for paying strict attention to me and to their work in the lesson hour. You see I wrote out everything they had to learn, in a small blank book. Into this book I promised to paste the gold or the green star at the close of each lesson hour.

“The idea worked like a charm. The rapt attention I secured even by the second lesson was beautiful to see. The children did the table work and finger exercises in concert, and were so absorbed that they scarcely lifted their eyes from the table, or looked away from their hands for a single minute, and their little faces

wore the most serious expression you can think of. The mothers, too, watched everything that was done, so they could show the children at home, in case they forgot anything.”

“And did the children learn to play on the piano?” asked Edith.

“Yes, indeed, but not at the first nor even at the second lesson. Why, they had so much to do to learn how to move their fingers, and then to learn the sounds of the piano and the letters that belong to them, that at first there was no time to play; besides they weren’t ready. But they didn’t mind the ‘getting ready’ part—they thought it was great fun. Their mothers thought so too, for they were sensible ladies. One said: ‘I don’t care how long it is before my child plays a piece; she has her life before her, and I want her music started on a thorough foundation.’

“So we had several ‘beginning lessons’ on the table. The children learned to hold their hands in good position, to make their fingers move correctly, to count and to play with the metronome—ah, you don’t know about the metronome yet, do you, kiddies?”

“Is it that funny pointed thing that stands on the piano, and ticks like a clock?” inquired Dorothy.

“The very thing! I’ll show you all about it to-morrow. Well, the children learned to raise their fingers and drop them exactly when the metronome ticked; to recite the chords and know the names of all the keys of the piano, and the sounds of quite a good many of them, too.

“Then they had to learn all about the staff, and how to write notes on it, and how to read them from the printed page. So you see they had a good many things to learn. Of course they all tried to know their lessons perfectly each time they came to the class, so they should be able to win the gold star, and have it placed in their lesson books.

“But really the greatest prize of all was to secure that ‘attention star,’ as they called it—the green star, which they received for paying good attention in the lessons. They would rather win that than the gold star which stood for a perfect lesson. If one child failed to receive the green star, a thing which very rarely happened, she was almost on the verge of tears, and it was difficult to pacify her, and arrange matters satisfactorily.

“Pretty soon the children began to play their little exercises on the piano. They improved very much in hearing the tones of the piano;

even the Lily was no longer 'tone-deaf,' for she began to know the sounds also. When the season was half over we gave an afternoon musicale at the home of one of the children. They played exercises, sang scales and tones, recited the triads, and then each played three pieces, to the delight of their parents and friends, and themselves, too."

"How old were the children?" questioned Edith.

"The Violet was seven, and the other two about a year older."

"I wish I was seven," sighed Dorothy, "then I could take music lessons too."

A significant glance passed between Aunt Helen and Mamma.

"The music games are nicer just now, for summer, I think; but if you learn to do them well we may have real lessons in the autumn, if Papa and Mamma are willing."

"We will see," answered Mamma. "But do hear that—who is at the piano?"

They all listened.

"It must be Phil—he slipped away a few moments ago; he is making those triads we learned this morning in our game—and he's getting them all right." Helen nodded in approval.

“He says he’s going to be a musician when he grows up, and play the piano like you,” volunteered Edith.

“That reminds me that once or twice lately, when I’ve finished my forenoon’s practise, I’ve found Phil listening. Once he was on the veranda, near the window, and the second time he was in a corner of the parlor. I asked him if he liked the music. ‘You bet I do!’ and his eyes shone like twin stars. I had been playing Beethoven and Mozart, and you wouldn’t suppose he’d care for those.”

“Who knows—he may become a musician some day,” commented Marianne.

CHAPTER X

“MR. TIME-BEATER”

THE members of the music class were seated in their little chairs around the low table, in the center of which stood “that queer, pointed thing that ticks like a clock,” as Dorothy had termed it the day before. Just now it stood quite still, with its door discreetly closed and fastened.

“I want you all to become acquainted with this strange looking object,” began Helen, smiling down into their eager faces. “It is generally known as a met-ro-nome, but we might give it a special name, and call it Mr. Time-Beater.”

“How-do, Mr. Time-Beater,” gurgled Harold.

“You will find Mr. Time-Beater always ready to show you how to count, always good-natured and willing—never tired or out of breath from ticking long and fast. He is our very good friend, and we couldn’t do without

him. He will teach you how to count in time, and then how to play in time. If you are obedient and do just as he tells you to do, all will be smoothness and harmony; if you disobey and try to count your own way, there will be hopeless and dreadful confusion.

“Now, when I open this little door, you will see that the young gentleman has a small stick, or wand, and with this he beats the time. We can get him to beat slow or fast as we move this metal weight up or down. We’ll ask him now to beat like a clock, in seconds, so we’ll put the weight at 60. Take your pencils and see if you can beat with him. It’s not so very easy at first, is it? Keep on trying, and you’ll get it. There, that’s better. Now, once more. Now again. Ah, you’re getting it; that is very good.

“Now try to tap your pencils twice every time Mr. Time-Beater strikes once. You must make your second tap come exactly between each stroke of the machine. I’ll show you. Listen and watch. I’ll do it again. Do you all see how it is done? Now each one may do it in turn.”

Several moments were spent with each child, until the little time study was quite understood.

“Since you are learning to beat so nicely, children,” continued Helen, “I want to tell you about measures. When the vegetable cart comes along in the morning, and Mamma wants some potatoes or apples, or peas, the vegetable man measures them out in a round wooden box. You’ve seen him do it many times. When Mamma gives you some milk to drink, she measures it in a glass. Now we measure out notes and beats in the same way. Learn this first by clapping your hands and counting 1, 2, 3, 4; make clap number one louder than the others. That’s good; keep right on till I tell you to stop. You have already had some of this in the marching game, so it will be quite easy. Now we will beat these measures on the table.

“Our first measures—we’ll do four of them—will contain four beats apiece, and we’ll count the beats 1, 2, 3, 4, just as you have already learned to do. Mr. Time-Beater will show you how to play these four measures, and you are to make one tap of your pencils for every one of his strokes.

“That’s really very well; I am quite proud of you. Now Mr. Time-Beater will strike in the same way, but you are to play only two measures with one tap to his stroke, and then

two measures with two taps to his stroke. Do you quite understand? Each one in turn tell me how the game goes. Good! Now, we will do it all together. I will count one whole measure first, while you sit quite still, without saying a single word, so you will be ready to start exactly at count one. There, that was pretty well for the first time. If you can learn this little game now, it will be very easy to use it on the piano a little later.

“You have done the beating and counting so well, that we will now make the game like this: two measures with one tap to Mr. Time-Beater’s stroke, then two measures with double taps, and after that two measures with single taps again. Yes, that’s a little more difficult, so we will do it several times. Ah, yes, now it is coming on all right. After you have done it once more together, you may each do it alone and then we can see who has the best time sense, and can beat most exactly.”

“I wonder who it will be,” mused Dorothy, feeling the end of her pencil.

“I’ll let you tell me first what you think,” answered Helen.

Each child now did the exercise in turn, while the others watched the result with breathless interest. Though no one did it perfectly,

it was agreed that Phil came off best, closely followed by Edith.

“The next thing we’ll do is to learn to move our fingers a little. Lay your hands flat on the table. Now turn up the thumb side till only the outside edge rests on the table. Next see if you can ‘pull in’ the second, or index finger, while you leave the others out straight. Pull the finger over slowly, slowly, till it touches the palm of your hand,—then let it spring out quickly. Do it ten times. That’s right. Now raise your arms and ‘shake out’ your hands, because we don’t want them to get stiff and tired. Put the hands back on the table, turn them up, and do the next finger, just as you did the first. After each finger has done the ‘pulling game,’ shake out your hands, to rest them.”

Well pleased with the success of the new games, Miss Richmond reviewed the old ones and played some new pieces for the children to listen to.

“Now, children, we have had enough for to-day. This is Thursday; by Saturday afternoon we might show Papa, Mamma, and Phil’s father and mother how well we are learning to listen and to count. We will play all our games for them, the very best we know how. I’m sure you will try your best, and if you do

them extra well, I promise a special fairy story when the games are finished.”

“Can’t we have a fairy story to-day—oh, please — to-day — this afternoon,” pleaded Dorothy and Edith, each catching Aunt Helen by a hand, to make her promise.

“You really have been very good children, and I ought to do something nice for you. Very well, a fairy story on the veranda, this afternoon, at four o’clock.”

“Thank you, dearest Aunty; we’ll be there.” Dorothy and Edith sealed their promises with a hug apiece.

This was the “really, truly fairy story” to which the children, and their elders too, eagerly listened that afternoon, on the veranda. It was found in the Red Book, and was called:

THE CAPTAIN OF TEN SOLDIERS

Fred sat before the piano in the big parlor, practising his piano lesson. At least he thought he was practising, and would have asserted he was if any one had asked him. His fingers made little tinkling sounds among the keys, but his thoughts were far away. The sunshine streamed in through the wide windows; the landscape was fresh and lovely in

its early spring dress. Fred knew just where the boys were playing at this very moment, and yet he had to stay in and do this tiresome music lesson.

He drew a long sigh and started in afresh.

“I say there,” cried an imperious voice, “call your soldiers to order!”

Fred looked about him but saw no one. He glanced down at his hands; the fingers were resting idly on the keys, or creeping lazily from one key to another.

“Make your soldiers toe the mark!” called the voice again. “Don’t you see they are quite asleep?”

The boy looked up, and there before his very eyes was a tiny figure standing on the music desk. It was that of an army officer, in full military regalia. He must have occupied a commanding position, judging from the number of golden bars on the sleeve of his white cloth coat, and the row of medals on his breast.

Fred drew in a low whistle of mingled astonishment and admiration. It never occurred to him to be afraid of this imperious little gentleman.

“You would like to ask who I am and why I am here. I am known as General Exactement” (he pronounced his name like a true

Frenchman) “and I oversee the musical studies of good boys and girls, who like music, of course, but don’t know how to practise it. I judge you are one of those boys who would love to practise, if you only knew how.” Here he looked down at the boy with a peculiarly humorous twinkle in his blue eyes. “Now I have come to show you how.

“In the first place, think of your ten fingers as so many soldiers over whom you hold command. They must do exactly as you tell them to; so it’s up to you to make them toe the mark.

“Sit erect now, and hold your body in military position, with your feet squarely on the floor; and no leaning against the back of the chair, whatever you do. Whoever saw a real soldier lolling about when he is on duty!

“Now, place your hands correctly on the keys, with each soldier where he belongs. Don’t let the outer side of your hand hang down like that! Your fifth finger and even your fourth can never do their duty as soldiers while they are in such a crooked position. Do you think you could ever march properly if you walked around with your back all doubled up? So stand your fourth and fifth soldiers squarely on their feet, and let them have the same chance

as the others. And mind, don't stiffen up your wrist, or you can never make your soldier-fingers do their work.

“Take the finger exercises now, which you are to learn for your next lesson, and play them over very carefully and slowly. My orders are few, but they must be obeyed: Fingers up when not playing—quick, exact movements—count out loud. Now—march!”

Fred pulled himself together, tried to place his hands in the desired position, and began. In an instant the tiny General leaned over from where he stood and dealt a broadside with his little sword on the boy's knuckles.

“Is that the way you make your soldiers obey? Look at them now, all off duty and lolling on the keys, when they should be held up in military position, ready for commands. Hold them up, sir, *up*, UP, I say.”

The General paced up and down the rose-wood path above the keyboard, giving orders, correcting the lazy soldiers and trying to institute some kind of discipline.

“How do you suppose a General would feel, who instead of finding his men ready and alert to hear orders and obey his command, should see them all drop down on the ground and take their ease? That is just what you are doing

now, when you let those little soldiers of yours idle away on the keys as they are doing this minute. So UP with them!"

Fred began to realize that the little General was a very serious person indeed, and the boy really tried to do as he was told. It was very difficult at first, for his teacher had never insisted on these things. Once in a while he forgot, and then the soldiers would become lazy and unruly once more; but a rap from the General brought them into position again. The General kept him at work on a few simple exercises and ignored pieces altogether.

"I am your Commander for the present," he asserted, drawing himself up and waving his sword above his head; "but remember, *you* are the Captain of your company of soldiers. Those ten soldiers can do nothing without your commands. They have no mind of their own, you know; they cannot march, stand still, or even run away, unless you give them leave. Do you begin to understand? Bless my soul, your time's up already, before I was aware of it. I will come to you each day at this hour, and I hope you will improve every time you see me."

As he said these words he seemed to vanish as quickly and silently as he had appeared. Fred found himself once more alone.

He regarded his “ten soldiers” thoughtfully. There was the first, called the “thumb,” a big, unwieldy fellow, who always tried to lord it over the others. It must now learn to know its proper place, and acquire the trick of moving quickly from the knuckle joint down there at the wrist, without pulling up or disarranging the hand. Number two must not stick out when raised, nor punch up at the knuckle; number three the same. The fourth soldier was the laziest man of the lot, while the fifth was so weak and wobbly he could scarcely stand upright.

“Oh, I’ll make you all mind me; you’ve got to do just as I tell you,” and Fred clenched a fist and brought it down on the back of the other hand with a sharp thud. Apparently satisfied with this promise to himself he jumped up, and ran off with a light heart to join his companions.

The affair of the practise hour was uppermost in his thoughts that evening, and though he did not go to the piano to practise, he tried to form his hand in position on the table, as he sat near it with his books. He was able, after a while, to get the position quite nicely, and finally made the fingers move up and down with considerable precision. It proved even

better to do this at the table, instead of on the piano, because there was no sound to take his attention away from attaining the exact position of hand and action of fingers required by the General. He found himself doing these same things the next day on his desk in school, and he began to think it rather good fun to make these ten soldiers "toe the mark" and obey his will.

True to his promise, General Exactement appeared the next day. Fred was active and alert this time and ready to help carry out the little Commander's orders. Everything went better to-day, and the General expressed his approval.

At the end of a week the boy had made good progress in the effort to control his ten soldiers. He faithfully tried to keep them in order, to have them take the required position and make exact movements. If he occasionally forgot and allowed the outside of his hand to hang down and the fingers to rest idly on the keys when they should be held up, alert and ready for action, a sharp rap from the General's tiny sword recalled him to duty.

Fred's music teacher was surprised and delighted with the careful correctness of his technical work, but puzzled to account for his curi-

ous neglect of pieces. She did not know that the fairy Commandant had forbidden their practise till the ten soldiers were a little more secure in their work and ready for such complicated movements. However she did not have to wait very long, for Fred's ten fingers soon became such obedient soldiers that the General permitted an *étude* to be played slowly and with the same exactness and care that had been expended on the technical exercises. After this the pieces received the same treatment. Everything was learned by heart, the exercises, the study, and later the piece.

“Do you not find, my boy, that this is a far better and more interesting method of practise than the indolent way you were going at it when I first found you?” asked the General one day. “It may be your teacher thinks you are not giving enough time to the pieces she has brought you to learn; perhaps your parents fancy you are not industrious because you are not rattling off a string of tunes. But in reality you have made more progress in these three weeks than you have ever made before, and it is progress of the best sort, the kind that pays best in the long run, because, above everything else, you have learned to think and to listen.

“In a few days,” he continued, “I shall have to leave you, but I trust you will never forget the precepts I have taught you, and that you will promise to follow them carefully. Do you think you have learned how to practise?”

“I understand it better than I did,” answered the boy.

“I should think so! Remember what I told you in the beginning. *You* are the Captain of your ten soldiers, and they must look to you for orders. It is for you to discipline them, to see that they keep correct positions and make the right movements; it is for you to send them hither and thither over the ivory field of action—the keyboard—on their mission, to make the beautiful music you love so well. You yourself must know exactly what are the movements you want them to make, the keys and harmonies you want them to play. I hope you understand what I have taught you, and will do your duty.”

“I will try, sir,” answered Fred.

“Take off that last word, and make it *I will*.”

The boy obeyed.

In a few days the tiny monitor, who had kept such strict yet kindly watch over Fred for several weeks, left him, not to return. The little General, however, continued his labor of love

for other boys and girls who needed the same kind of help.

Fred had learned some of the important secrets of correct, exact practise, and it is pleasant to state that he never relapsed into the old careless ways again. If ever tempted to do so, a remembrance of little General Exactement and his tiny sword raps was enough to recall him to duty.

CHAPTER XI

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

SATURDAY afternoon had at last arrived. The sun, a ball of molten gold, was slipping toward the west; the shadows made by the maple-trees along the road were lengthening gradually; bees and grasshoppers buzzed and hummed lazily, and once in a while a clear bird note sounded from the top of the tall shrubs that grew at the edge of the Richmond lawn.

Mr. Richmond was taking a day off, and he and Uncle Harry, otherwise Mr. Henry Scott, had gone fishing; both had solemnly promised to return in time to be present at the children's performance in the afternoon.

Helen had brought out the little table and the low chairs, and arranged them on the veranda, quite near one of the long windows opening from the parlor, at which the piano stood. It seemed pleasanter to be out there among the vines and flowers than indoors. On the table stood the metronome and the xylophone.

True to their word, the fishermen returned in good time, and joined the ladies on the veranda.

When all was ready, Helen explained briefly that what the listeners were about to see and hear was somewhat unusual, and might seem to them foolishness. For the children could not play anything on the piano, as they were not taking music lessons. What they had done was to make some preliminary studies—in fact they had been learning to hear—which was the way music study really ought to start. They were beginning to be awake, she said, to the sounds of nature about them; they knew the call of the robin and the blackbird, the song of the brook, the sounds of various insects. They were also learning to know the letters of the keyboard and some of the tones of the piano, and not only could recognize them when played, but could also sing a few of them.

“For instance, they know the tones of my pitch pipe here.” She sounded the *A*, and then the *C*, which were instantly recognized and sung by the childish voices.

Then she tapped *C* on the xylophone, and asked them to sing up to *G* by letters. Afterward the whole octave, from *C* to *C*, was sung. Next she tapped *C*, then skipped about among

the five tones, from *C* to *G*, the children naming the note struck, which they did pretty correctly, with only a few slips. This seemed quite wonderful to the listeners.

"The children," she continued, "are learning to form chords of three notes, and they find this a delightful pastime. Phil, you can play the triad of *C* for us; then each one of you in turn may play a triad, or chord, one on every note of the scale."

When all had done this, the children were asked to recite the letters of the seven triads belonging to the scale of *C*, which they did correctly.

"Now they will repeat the chord game, but this time will sing the tones together with the letters belonging to them. This idea is rather new to them, as we have only lately tried it; so they may not always do it exactly right."

When the singing and listening games were over, the door of Mr. Time-Beater's house was opened, and his little wand led them in some time games, with single and double taps to the beat.

"I must tell you," observed Helen, in an aside to the listeners, "that I have seen many piano players who have not as accurate a sense

for time and tone as these children have already acquired.

“Now, children, just sit right still where you are; I’ll play on the piano one of the pieces you have heard before, and you can beat the time to it with your pencils. We’ll not ask Mr. Time-Beater to help us, for you shall beat quite alone by yourselves; it will give you a chance to show how well you can do it.”

Entering the parlor through one of the long windows, Helen seated herself at the piano and began playing, while the pencils outside beat quite a regular tattoo on the table.

“What is the name of this piece, Harold?”

“*The Jolly Farmer*,” cried the boy.

“No, it’s *The Happy Farmer*,” corrected Dorothy; “the happy farmer coming home from his work in the fields. You always call it *The Jolly Farmer*, Harold.”

“Well, if he’s done with his work, I guess he’s jolly,” remarked Edith.

“Where is the melody in this little music story found?” Dorothy was asked.

“Oh, I know—in the left hand.”

“Phil, tell us who wrote *The Happy Farmer*.”

“Mr. Robert Schumann, I *think*,” was the answer.

“Yes, you’re right. Now, I’ll play another piece, and Edith can say which hand has the tune.” Helen gave the pretty *Melodie*, by Thomé, which all recognized as having the tune in the right hand.

“We’ll finish off now with the Marching Game. Children, you can march up and down the veranda, while I play. You can count one, two, three, four—and clap your hands every time you say ‘one.’ Be sure and keep good time and step.” She struck up a lively, rhythmic march, while the children marched back and forth before their elders, with heads erect, eyes sparkling, and the bearing of little majors.

“Bravo, bravo—first rate, I must say,” cried Uncle Harry.

Everybody clapped and laughed at the same time, while the little entertainers ran to their parents, and nestled close for an approving hug.

“Our performance is over for to-day,” said Helen, coming through the long window and joining the group.

“Didn’t I hear something about a story to finish off with?” remarked Mrs. Scott, with a bright glance at Helen.

“Oh, the fairy story—the fairy story! Aunt Helen, you surely won’t forget that!”

“No, surely not. Harold, just get me that little Red Book, lying on the piano.” As he brought it and laid it in her lap with both dimpled hands, she continued:

“This is my musical ‘thought book,’ in which I write down all the wisdom I can think of or hear about. The story I will tell you now”—she turned the leaves lingeringly—“ah, here it is. It seems like another really truly fairy story, but the best part is that it can be made true at any time. It is called:

THE PRINCESS AND THE MAGIC WAND

There was once a little Princess, who lived in a great castle, which was set in the midst of beautiful gardens and a fine park.

Though surrounded with every luxury, the little girl was brought up very strictly, and had to do her lessons just as regularly and carefully as the most ordinary child. And among other things, she had to learn to sing and to play the piano; for a Princess must always be a good musician.

She had a grand piano, with a beautiful golden case, which was her very own, a little

practise piano to do her exercises on, and every known device to aid her studies.

The Princess was expected to practise her piano lessons at least two hours every day, and it must be set down to her credit that she did so regularly. But somehow, in spite of everything, she never seemed to satisfy the old Professor when he came to give her the lessons. She invariably failed in one important thing: she couldn't seem to play in time.

"One, two, three—one, two, three," the Professor would count, beating time vehemently on top of the beautiful golden piano. "Your Highness does not play in time; again, again!" And then the little Princess would have to begin all over again.

("Guess the Princess didn't have the 'pre-keyboard training' our children are getting," remarked Papa, *sotto voce*, regarding his boots.)

The Princess would start her piece over again, but soon the Professor must stop her once more; alas, the time was wrong again.

"Your Highness must always count out loud when you practise."

"Indeed I do, Mr. Professor; I do really."

"Well, count better, then, for the next lesson."

But there was always some trouble with the time at every lesson, and with the rhythm too. The poor little Princess did not seem to have the right understanding of these things. She tried to count, it is true, but when she failed to make the beats come right when she spoke them aloud, she counted softly to herself, which, as every one knows, is of hardly any use at all, if you want to be thorough.

One day the Princess sat before her practise piano, gazing at the music in front of her. There was a place in it where she had to play three notes in one hand against two notes in the other hand. She was wondering how she was ever going to play them correctly, so that the Professor would not scold her when he came next time. She tried to do it this way and that, but none of the ways sounded right, and she could no more have counted it than she could have turned the moon into green cheese.

As she sat there quite in despair, she heard a sweet voice which seemed quite close by, say:

“I will help you, if you will let me.”

The Princess looked all about, but could discover no one.

“Here I am, on top of your metronome.”

The Princess looked, and there, on the

pointed peak of the metronome, sat the most fascinating little creature she had ever seen. It was a small fairy, only about three inches high, dressed in spangled lace. She wore a jeweled fillet among her golden curls, and carried in her right hand a tiny silver wand.

"I know you don't like the metronome, for you never use it if you can avoid it," went on the sweet voice, clear as silver bells; "but I am the Metronome Fairy, and I can help you over all these hard places, if you will only let me."

"Indeed, I will let you help me; please, *please* do," cried the little Princess.

"I am only useful when you put me to use," answered the Fairy, wisely. "I can teach you to count in a short time. We will begin with a little scale practise." She raised her silver wand as she spoke. "Now, after I beat four you begin to play the scale of *C*, first with one note and then with two notes to my beat; but you must count out loud with me—*so*, just as I do." Suiting the word to the action the Fairy beat with her wand, and counted out the time as loudly as her tiny voice would permit.

Thus urged and encouraged, the Princess tried to do her best. She made many failures at first, but at last succeeded in playing the scale as the Fairy had told her to do. That

little person was exceedingly strict; nothing but absolute perfection would suit her: no half work was allowed. And what was best of all, she showed the Princess just how to do it. For the Professor had merely told her to count, but the Fairy patiently instructed her, and watched to see that she did it.

An hour flew quickly by. Then the Fairy said, "I will come to-morrow, and help you again," after which she suddenly vanished from sight.

With daily and careful practise, under the tutelage of the Fairy, the little Princess really learned to count quite nicely—something she had never succeeded in doing before. She already saw that "she must put her mind to it," as the Fairy expressed it. And the Fairy was never pleased unless everything was perfectly exact: she must have every note and group of notes in their correct places.

The Princess had a better lesson the next time the Professor came, and she continued to improve so rapidly that her teacher was astonished. She was soon able to play three notes in one hand against four or five in the other. Best of all she had learned that the little counting machine, which she had always thought she hated, and never used if she could avoid it, was

one of her best friends—that is to say, the Metronome Fairy was her very good friend, who never failed to come to her aid when asked.

“Are you the only Metronome Fairy in the world?” asked the Princess one day of her little friend.

“O dear no,” tinkled the Fairy, with her silvery laugh, as she shook her golden curls, and balanced herself on one tiny jeweled slipper. “Each metronome has a fairy, who can be just as helpful as I am. But if people do not appreciate us, if boys and girls will not open their metronome doors and let us out—because they don’t want to see us—how can we help them? This makes us sorry, for we really want to help them. The door of your metronome was partly open on that day when I came to you first, so I was released. After that you let me out of your own free will, because you wanted me to help you. I am always ready to help anybody who will let me.”

“You are a dear,” returned the Princess; “I just love you, and am very grateful for all you have done for me. The old Professor was quite pleased with me to-day, for the way in which I had worked up the tempo of that *Spinning Song* he had given me; and my singing master has now hopes of my learning rhythm.

I am quite sure I could never have done all this without your help. And I am going to give orders that all the boys and girls who are studying music shall have metronomes, and shall open the doors of their metronomes to let out the Metronome Fairies, so they shall learn their music correctly. And when I am old enough, I shall issue a decree to that effect."

Helen paused and laid down the book. The children eyed the metronome on the table as though they expected to see the Fairy slip out of the little door, and perch on top of it, as she had done in the story.

"The little Princess really issued the decree, just as she said she would," continued Helen; "so the boys and girls now-a-days can learn to play in time, and can cultivate the *time sense*, which is such an important part of music study."

Lifting the book from her lap, she gave them the moral of her story.

When you come to think of it, you notice that everything in the world that has life moves in rhythmic motion, and music most of all. We cannot be too grateful for this same

little instrument that helps us cultivate such an important sense.

When we go to a concert, many of us never think how exact and thorough the training of each man in the orchestra must be, in order to bring out perfect unity in the music. Every man, from the first violin to the drummer, must be able to keep perfect time. So must the soloist at the piano, the singer and the violinist. The conductor himself, as he enters and takes up his baton, knows that his men, and the soloists as well, have long ago learned to count perfectly, and can follow his beat. The bâton in his hand becomes a veritable Magic Wand, that calls into life all the wonderful harmonies and sound-pictures the composer had in mind when he wrote the music.

Let the boys and girls who wish to become good musicians keep in mind the story of the little Princess and the Metronome Fairy. They should become acquainted with this Magic Wand, which teaches them how to acquire accurate time and rhythm. Some young players, I am sorry to say, have no Metronome Fairy of their own, while others show no desire to possess one. All should learn to love this cheery little Fairy, whose one aim in life is to be helpful.

As the reading ceased, the children clamored to know if that was all, and what the Princess did next; while Mr. Richmond said:

“My dear girl, I’ll have to put you in my new book, as the champion Child-Music-Educator; the Originator of New Methods for teaching children the great art of music, and so on!”

“I don’t mind your raillery over my enthusiasm, because I know you can’t say anything against the work we are doing: that speaks for itself.”

Just at this moment Betsy wheeled out a pretty wicker tea-table, laden with dainty cakes and iced things to drink, “which were very acceptable after the exertions of the last hour,” as Uncle Harry put it.

Mrs. Scott was warm in her approval of the demonstration, and hoped there would be a music party soon again.

“I think we will have another before the summer is over,” answered Helen, “when we will show you even greater progress.”

CHAPTER XII

THE MYSTERIOUS BOX

LATE in the afternoon, a few days after the "music party," Miss Richmond was sauntering leisurely along the road toward Hillcrest. She had spent an hour down in Sunshine Dell, nestled at the foot of her favorite tree, reading, musing—listening meanwhile to the wonderful tones of the hermit thrush, that shy little songster in brown who, if he can be traced to some quiet haunt where he can be hidden and undisturbed, will entrance us with his song. How did he come by those tones—so clear, so heart-searching, so ecstatic? Was it the thrush or the nightingale that Beethoven listened to—while he *could* listen—and whose song he imprisoned in his *Pastoral Symphony*? How he loved to roam the woods and byways, where he could be alone with nature, and gather thought and inspiration from her various sights and sounds—her colors, clouds, odors, soft breezes and tempests! All great masters have

drunk deeply at this perennial fount of inspiration, and the more the rest of us can learn and absorb from a study of these things, the better we shall appreciate and love the musician's work.

Still under the spell of that delicious hour of dreams and revery, Helen Richmond wended her way slowly along the flower-bordered road that led up the hill. Just as she passed the brown house, Mrs. Scott, sitting at an upper window, caught sight of Helen, hailed her, then ran downstairs and out to the gate.

"Do come in," she cried; "there is a package here waiting for you. My husband brought it in last night when he came from the city. He said that it contained some things for the music class; just what, I don't know. Perhaps you'd rather sit here on the piazza, in this easy chair, while I get it for you."

"How delightful it is here!" remarked Helen, with a sigh of content, as she seated herself in the comfortable wicker chair, on the vine-shaded piazza and looked out over the little garden, with its masses of dear old-fashioned flowers, asleep in the afternoon sunshine.

Soon Mrs. Scott brought out the package,

a good-sized box, and placed it on a chair near her. Helen was all interest at once.

“For me? What can it be—have you an idea?”

“None whatever, though he seemed to think it a huge joke. He said he’d like to be around if you opened it before the children.”

“My best plan, then, is *not* to open it before the children, but to investigate the mystery now, at this very moment.”

She rapidly undid strings and wrappings and lifted the lid. Her puzzled look of surprise caused Mrs. Scott also to peer into the mysterious box. At first neither could guess what the irregular looking parcels contained; they were wrapped in tissue paper, and all fitted neatly into each other.

“Oh, I see,” cried Helen, the next moment; “it’s a whole set of Kinder-symphony toys! Oh, what fun! Here are the cymbals, and this must be the bell-tree; isn’t it a pretty one, with its red tassels, reminding one of all sorts of Oriental things. And here are two kinds of trumpets, large ones and smaller ones.”

“And what are these curious looking things?” asked Mrs. Scott, pointing to several pieces that were quite beyond her comprehension.

“I think those are the various bird sounds;

yes, here is the list. This little instrument with the bellows is supposed to sound like the cuckoo; here is the nightingale, though that little receptacle will have to be partly filled with water first, before the liquid notes of the heavenly songster can be produced. This long piece of wood, looking almost like a carpenter's plane, will, they say, imitate the quail, and this little pipe here will give the chirp of the cricket. Listen, this is the way it goes; I must try them all."

"Aren't you afraid pandemonium will reign when the children get possession of all these?" asked Mrs. Scott.

"Oh, I'll see to it that the things are used with discretion. As they are given to me, I can do as I like with them. I'll only let the children have them in our morning games, and they shall learn to use them rightly. At first we will take out only one instrument at a time; each child shall learn to use it, find what tones it makes, and so on; then they can emulate each other in playing it. One day we can use the trumpets—there's ever so much to be learned about those; one has four tones, I see, and the other has the notes from *C* to *C*. We can take the four-note one first, and learn about that. Another day we can exercise the bird sounds.

I will think up every way I can to make the best use of this unique gift. Do tell 'His Nibs,' as you call him sometimes, how delighted I am with the box, and how I thank him."

"Yes, I'll tell him—he will be glad to know you are pleased. Won't you wait till he comes, then he can carry it up to the house for you?"

"Oh, no, thanks; I'll just take it right along with me now. It's not very heavy. Really, I think I shall have to take the whole kit down to the dell, or to some remote place, where I can be alone, and experiment with the toys, for I have never used them all. If I don't, that bright boy of yours may get ahead of me. Indeed, I think you'll have to make a musician out of Phil; he is already developing such a good ear for sounds of all kinds. Yesterday, when I finished practising that Beethoven sonata I'm working at, I turned around and saw the child curled up in the arm-chair. He had a picture book in his hands but wasn't looking at it. When he saw he was discovered, he jumped down and came over to me, standing quite straight, with his hands behind him, looking at me; then he said: 'My, but that's fine music! When I'm big enough I'm going to make some like that.' Wasn't that dear?"

"Phil is apt to be intense, at times. He

really loves that music hour every morning; nothing but a pouring rain would keep him away. Of course you may say it's only a few steps up there, and it's because he wants to be with the other children; but I assure you he wouldn't miss the music games for anything in the world. He often says, 'Oh, Mother, why don't we have a piano here?' I really think he could pick out quite a lot of things on it already."

"I've no doubt he could, but it has not been my plan this summer to give any of the children piano lessons. I want, instead, to teach them many of the things that should precede piano practise, and which are so seldom taught."

"I know, and I begin to see how necessary they are. There's Edith now, a sweet, gentle child, but a little inclined to be apathetic. She seems twice as much awake now as when she came here; she notices sights and sounds as she never did before."

"There's nothing equal to music to awaken the child thought. And, really, what could be more appropriate than for the child to live in an atmosphere and in a rhythm of sweet sounds."

"That is not the way music is usually pre-

sented to the child," remarked Mrs. Scott, with a smile.

"I know—more's the pity. But I must skip up the hill, or they will think I'm lost or have fallen into the brook."

"When are we to hear some more music stories?"

"Any time you like; perhaps to-morrow afternoon, after your siesta—will that do?"

"Just the thing; you will see me without fail."

And Helen, gathering her wonder-box in her arms, went up the hill with a smile on her lip, as she hummed a folk tune.

CHAPTER XIII

TWO MUSIC TALKS

MINDFUL of her promise to Mrs. Scott, Helen descended to the veranda late in the afternoon of the next day. She knew her sister's daily siesta was over, for she had heard the hum of voices beneath her window. She found the ladies there and also her brother and Mr. Scott. Thinking the men would not care to hear her "Music Talks," she slipped the papers into a book she carried, and joined the group with quite an unconcerned face.

But she soon found they had been expecting her, and that she could not escape reading the papers.

"I've told them what you promised to do," began Mrs. Scott; "and you see we are all here."

"And I thought I might get out of it, since you are *all* here. But if you really care to hear these two little sketches, you shall. I've called the first:

Listening to the Rhythms about Us

The word rhythm is not easy to define, and if you consult the dictionary you will hardly find a definition that is exactly to the point—at least I have failed to discover one. Perhaps that is why so many people use the word with only a vague idea of its meaning, for it can be used in so many ways. Primarily it has to do with two things, motion and measure; so we might call it “measured motion,” which seems simple enough, when you come to think of it.

Now every one has, more or less, an inborn sense of this measured motion—this measuring off of motion or time, and punctuating it with some sort of stress or accent. Even the savages beat sticks and drums to keep time to movement in their barbaric dances. With them the sense of measured movement, or of rhythm, is far keener than their sense for musical sounds, or for melody and harmony.

The poets tell us that the stars and all heavenly bodies move in rhythmic harmony, and we like to think there is music in the motion of the spheres. But close at hand and all about us, many common things have some special movement or rhythm of their own; indeed, the

very air itself is trembling and throbbing with its own particular pulsation.

If you are in the country, or in the open anywhere, you can discover a multitude of rhythmic movements or accents, some of them making musical sounds as well. Think of the busy hum of insect-life, for instance—how varied and wonderful! We need ears that are quick and alert to locate or even detect the more delicate and almost impalpable sounds made by some of these little creatures; though the grasshopper and katydid are not at all slow in making their presence known. The cricket that hops across your path as you walk through field or wood has his own rhythmic song; so has the woodpecker, locust and bumble-bee. That woodman whom you passed just now in your walk, did you notice how regularly and rhythmically the blows of his ax fell, as he cut into the heart of that great oak tree he was felling? And as you came to the little lake, there was a pretty steam yacht, puffing away in measured motion, while the oars of the row-boats dotting the water made quite different and varied rhythms.

If you are on the city streets, you can note other kinds of rhythm. Even as you walk, your steps and your pulses beat in obedience

to the laws of measured movement. The lame man you passed just now was unable to step out evenly; there was a halt in his gait that forced his defect on your attention, owing to the long step and the short step he was obliged to take. The story is told of the composer, Saint-Saëns, that even as a child his feeling for rhythm was so acute that he noticed when people stepped unevenly, for he said one day of a man walking about in the next room, "He is walking in trochee rhythm," which means, as you know, in long and short meter.

There is the scissors-grinder now, coming down the street. How he shuffles along, his bell ringing as unevenly as his steps are uncertain. When he stops at a neighbor's door, and begins his work of sharpening some knives, his grindstone makes various kinds of beats, as he applies the edge of the knife to it, or lifts it off, to feel whether it is yet keen enough.

You may have thought the sound of horses' hoofs was very much the same always; but listen to them closely, and you will discover a great variety in both the quality and quantity of the hoof-beats. Some seem to fall with regularly recurring accents, while others have quite uneven rhythms.

Within doors there are still other forms of

measured movement to which we may give attention. We can almost imagine the different clocks are beating in as many rhythms, as they tick along so ceaselessly; that is, we can imagine this if we ever think of listening to the clock. We usually, however, treat such sounds as part of the necessary hum of the atmosphere, and give no heed to the clock, unless it ticks intermittently, or stops altogether; then we realize all at once how unconsciously it fills the silence of the room with its cheerful little ticks. And how many qualities and varieties there are of these same cheery ticks!

Without going too much into detail, we must be already convinced that the world of nature and life about us is full of pulsation and movement; that much of this is measured movement. That is what we have in music: measured motion. Time and Rhythm are two of the most important principles in music, and should be cultivated from the very beginning of our study. Some people seem quite unable to play or sing in time; much less are they able to comprehend the rhythmic meaning and swing of the composition. This defect is far more widespread than one would suppose, and yet it is a defect not difficult to overcome, if one goes about it in the right way.

Let us make a few experiments. Tap your pencil a dozen times on the table, making the beats perfectly even and regular. By way of contrast, tap a dozen strokes which are irregular and uneven, and then return to the even taps again, so that the difference is perfectly clear. Each tap must be exactly half way between the one before and the one after it—not a hair's-breadth nearer the one than the other; if this happens the time will be uncertain.

Helen looked up:

“That sounds as though it were the simplest thing in the world to do, but you'll have to try it once to be convinced it is not so easy after all.”

Then she continued:

When you are quite able to beat with absolute accuracy in single taps, begin to use accents. Put stress on the first of every pair of taps; in other words, accent every other beat. Then accent the first beat in every four taps. And then the first of every three. This last will give you the waltz or mazurka rhythm, and the accents of four will apply to the march.

An interesting time test for a group of people sitting about a table, is found in the fol-

lowing little exercise: At a given signal, count from one up to ten. The first number is spoken aloud, the other numbers are counted by each person silently, until the tenth count is reached, which is then spoken aloud by each one. A merry laugh will follow the result, for it will be seen that each sense of time is a little different from the others.

Or the same test may be applied at the table. Each person can tap on the under side of the table. The first count may be tapped together, "aloud"; the other counts are to be tapped inaudibly until the tenth is reached, which is then struck strongly, when the various ideas of regular time, so-called, entertained by the different persons, will stand revealed. The metronome should be used to beat a preliminary measure before starting. A student with a good sense of time, can keep the rhythm of these beats in mind, as he taps while the metronome is silent. Various rhythmic patterns can be tapped in this fashion: as, for instance, two measures each of one, two, three, and four quarter-note rhythms, returning to the measure of one tap by way of the twos and threes.

Such studies in tapping and beating of time and rhythm can be carried on and on, until not only from one to eight notes can be tapped to

each stroke of the metronome, but whole pieces can be beaten out with properly regulated taps on the table. For rhythm has already been defined as what remains of the piece when melody and harmony have been taken away. In the more advanced work—taking a Mozart sonata as an example—every note in the right hand can be tapped to the beat of the metronome, no matter whether one note or a dozen are required to make up each beat. One rapidly acquires a sense of proportion and balance by means of such exercises.

“Do I make myself clear in that last paragraph?” inquired Helen, looking up at her auditors.

“I think you do,” answered Herbert; “it sounds very practical, though I don’t suppose I could do any of it myself. I should think one could learn it without a great deal of trouble.”

“All my pupils, young or old, are required to do this time-beating work. You see I put the pupils in classes, so that we can have weekly drill in all these important, but little-thought-of things. This weekly drill is one of the greatest helps I have. Why is it, I wonder, that girls generally hate to count, and avoid it in

every way, shape, and manner. To count aloud, is like breaking their backs, as the old saying goes. For my part, I won't tolerate such foolish laziness; my pupils soon learn they must count, if they study with me."

"Hear, hear!" cried her brother. "Is this our gentle Helen?"

"Of course I want to be gentle and loving, and all that; at the same time I must be obeyed. But this is a digression; I'll just finish up about rhythm study."

You cannot imagine the great benefit it will be to you to cultivate to the utmost your sense of time and rhythm. All who are doing good work in the field of music recognize this. Mme. Pauline Lucca, who was one of the great singers in opera, once said that during a performance she never for one moment lost track of the beat or rhythm. She constantly counted or kept the beat in mind, and no matter how dramatic the situation, her mental eye was on the conductor's bâton, and her thought on the time and rhythm in which she was singing. Pianists, too, must be equally steady in time-keeping; otherwise they can never play with orchestra, nor can they perform acceptably in any way. It is true that well-known players

and singers take some liberties with the tempo, but they know when and how to do so, because, in the beginning, they learned to keep perfect time. Now that they are great artists, they are able to make the slight variations of the given movement that help to render the composition more free and individual in interpretation.

If, then, we will listen intelligently and earnestly to the various rhythms to be heard every day about us, we will soon cultivate sharper and more delicate ears, and find that our time sense is being greatly improved.

“Good for you, sister!” said Herbert Richmond, as the girl paused. “You have stated the facts clearly and concisely; I approve of you.”

“Words of commendation from my literary brother mean much to me,” returned Helen, with a low bow in his direction. “My observations may not be clothed in high-flown language, but I mean every word I say, and can demonstrate the truth of each point.”

“You said you had two essays, and that this was the first; you must have another up your sleeve somewhere,” remarked Marianne, as soon as there was a convenient lull in the conversation.

“I see you don’t intend to let me off,” and Helen threw her a brilliant smile. “The second ‘Talk’ is very short, but it’s on a subject that’s given me much thought as well as no end of trouble. It often happens that as soon as my girls get well started and are making good progress, then the teachers in school load them down with difficult studies which take up all their time. Or it happens that the girls go off to college, where they are made to believe there is no time for practise, so their music is dropped for several years, until they are ‘out of school.’ Ten chances to one whether they ever take it up again. Of course I feel they should always find some corner of the day to devote to music, and that it is their duty to do so. Therefore I have called the second ‘talk’

Music Study for the School Girl

Many girls now-a-days seem to think they have no time for music study during their school or college course, and so they lose three or four years of precious time, at the end of which they may have lost the desire to continue their musical studies. This seems a serious loss indeed, when with a little planning it might often be avoided.

The Time: You love music, you say, but have so little time to practise that it hardly seems worth while to study. Still there really may be time, if you will plan a bit. Remember you have all the time there is—all that any one else has; it rests with you what you will do with it—how you will spend it. Perhaps some of those moments that are frittered away during the day may be gathered up and given to music. How about the early morning? It is the finest time for work to be found in the whole day. That extra hour before breakfast, which you might have if you would only rise earlier, is a wonderful hour, so much may be wrought and accomplished in it. If possible it can be devoted to piano practise; this with half an hour later in the day will put one hour and a half at your command. You can, of course, divide the hour and a half into two equal parts or periods. If this amount of time is daily and systematically given to music, more can be accomplished in one year than you ever thought possible.

“That must apply to me,” said Marianne, in an audible aside, bending her pretty head and crossing her hands over her breast in mock humility.

“Remember ‘present company,’ Marianne dear,” said Helen, in an answering aside.

During your daily walks there is opportunity to do a little music thinking. You can recite to yourself the scales and chords. You can think of how the notes are arranged and how they follow each other in the *étude* or piece you are trying to learn. You can also listen to the sounds and rhythms about you. On these walks you can take your breathing exercises too, for these are just as important for those who play the piano as for those who use the voice—in fact for all who want to keep strong and healthy.

I feel very confident that with a little careful planning—cutting your garment according to the cloth, as the tailor would say—you can arrange the time so that there will be opportunity to pursue one of your favorite studies. There are any number of girls who are able to give two and three hours daily to music study, and at the same time can stand high in their school classes. Those are the girls who are careful of their time, and do not waste the minutes.

So much for the time; now a word about the manner of using it in the study itself.

The Study: If you intend to study music

at all, do it thoroughly, or not at all. So many people make the mistake of considering music in the light of an amusement, merely to while away an idle hour; for this reason, they never do anything thoroughly or well in music. You would not consider any of your school studies in that light: mathematics, for instance, or history. If we were simply to amuse ourselves in an idle hour with mathematical problems, we would never get anywhere, and would only be wasting our time. But we well know such problems need serious study. Why should not music be treated with equal seriousness? Music is a great art, occupying the whole attention of many gifted men and women. It has been claimed that there is more all around mental discipline in correct piano study, than in the pursuit of the languages of Greek and Latin, or even of mathematics.

If you attempt to study music, then, do so with your whole heart. Even if you have only one hour to give, make every moment count. Divide the practise time into sections, giving so many minutes each to technical exercises, finger gymnastics, new and old pieces. Keep a few pieces always in practise, ready to play if asked to do so. Every time you play for some one, it benefits you, mentally and musically,

while at the same time it is giving pleasure to others.

Perhaps you can find an extra hour during the week, in which to read four-hand music with one of your young friends, who has about the same amount of proficiency that you have. With her you can become familiar with the classic symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, the overtures to the earlier and later operas, and also with modern and popular music. This hour may be to you one of the happiest of all the week, and you will feel the benefit of the musical knowledge so gained all your life.

If you have made a good beginning and love your music, don't give up studying it simply because there may come periods in your school work when the teachers seem to think they must have the bulk of your time in which to prepare the lessons they give; for by taking thought you can, in nine cases out of ten, make a place for your practise. If you have but one little hour a day, use that time as earnestly as though your life depended on it. And, believe me, the study of music will bring happiness and blessing to you always.

“There, you dear, patient people,” cried Helen, as she finished, and rose to her feet,

“I’ll not inflict any more of my theories on you; you’ve been awfully good to listen to these.”

“Oh, I say, teacher, you’re all right! If I weren’t so old—I might even begin music myself,” said Mr. Scott, with a serio-comic expression.

“Never too late to mend,” laughed Helen.

Just then the children, who had been playing down in the honeysuckle arbor, burst upon the scene, and put an end to the subject for the time being.

They clamored for a story on their own account, but Helen was obdurate. “No more to-day,” she told them, but agreed to give them one the next afternoon, if “they were very good.”

How she kept her promise will be found in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XIV

THE QUEEN'S MUSIC CLASS

IT was just at dusk. Mildred sat at the open window, looking up and down the quiet street. This was the hour set apart for her piano practise, and she had already been at it. She had played each of the scales once, then the three études and her new piece. The hour was not more than half over, but Mildred thought she heard the sound of a street band playing somewhere, and had run to the window to listen. The music echoed faintly in the distance; one could hardly tell just what it was, or where it came from. Mildred put her head far out of the window and peered into the gathering twilight. A nearby street lamp blossomed into a pale yellow flame. By its light Mildred saw the figure of a little girl standing near the doorway, as if about to enter—a pretty little girl, who seemed to be about her own age.

“Do you know where the music is?” asked Mildred.

“Yes, I know where it is,” answered the little girl, and her voice, as she spoke, was itself like music. “Would you like to come with me and hear it?”

For answer, Mildred slipped out of the room, through the hallway and down the steps. The little girl put a soft hand in hers, and together they walked up the street in the deepening twilight.

After a short while they stopped before a small, low, wooden house. Mildred had often passed this little house in the daytime, on her way to school, and had sometimes wondered who lived behind those closed blinds. Now, as it seemed, she was at last going to find out.

The little girl drew her companion up the two or three low steps before the doorway, and, lifting the quaint, heavy, brass knocker, gave three peculiar raps. The door opened of its own accord and they found themselves in a wide, low passage, which seemed full of mysterious shadows. Faint rays of light filtered around the edges of a heavy curtain that hung over a doorway at the farther end of the passage. The little girl led the way to this doorway, lifted the heavy draperies and they entered.

Mildred was almost blinded by the dazzling

scene that greeted her. She put up her hands to shield her eyes from the radiance of it. It seemed to her as if several moments passed before she recovered sufficiently to look timidly about her.

Then she found herself in a spacious and elegant salon. The walls were adorned with rare paintings, a fountain at one end of the salon dripped its perfumed waters into a marble basin, and there were flowers, vines and palms in profusion everywhere.

In the center of the room stood a beautiful piano, with a case of pure gold. Near it sat a lady of entrancing loveliness. Mildred had never looked upon a face and form of such exquisite beauty. Her blond hair was held by a fillet of brilliants, which made her look like a queen. Soft, filmy draperies fell around her, and she sat in her golden chair as though on a throne. Young girls, clad in simple white, sat in rows of seats, as though in school. There were lads among them, too. All the young people had such happy, expectant faces that it seemed they must be doing just what they loved to do.

Mildred's companion explained the meaning of the scene before her. The Queen interested herself deeply in music. She was a thorough

musician herself and desired the ladies of her household to be well trained as players and teachers. For she thought that in order to understand the art of music, one must be able to instruct others. So each of these young ladies was required to teach a class of pupils, to prove she had been well taught herself. The Queen summoned these students to her salon at stated intervals, examined the work they had done, criticized, commended or encouraged each pupil, counseled their teachers, and looked after everything. The visits to the Queen's salon were events of the highest importance in the lives of these boys and girls. Mild censure from her lips caused them to work doubly hard to please her, while her slightest word of praise raised them to the seventh heaven of happiness.

The Queen had just called for technical studies, as her companion led Mildred to a seat. Several girls were asked to go to the piano, one after another, and play certain exercises in chords, which they all seemed to know by heart. The Queen listened intently, as each girl played; sometimes she corrected slight faults here and there. Mildred noticed how exactly the exercises were played, how the fingers were prepared for the keys they were to take, how full the tones were, and how interesting the ex-

ercises sounded—as pretty, almost, as pieces. Each pupil seemed modestly, playfully ambitious to do them better than any one else in order to win the gracious Queen's approval.

When all had finished the chord exercises, one of the young ladies sang a lovely song, by way of variety.

The Queen now called for some scale playing. The whole class was on the alert at once. The Queen lifted a book from the table at her side and held it up.

“This is for the boy or girl who can play the best scales for me to-day,” she said. Then looking in Mildred's direction, she continued:

“I see a little visitor here with us, who is surely most welcome. If she is studying music, she may like to try for the prize. She is our guest, so she may play first. Will you come forward, my dear?”

The request was a gentle command, which Mildred did not dare refuse. She rose from her seat and came toward the Queen, who graciously motioned her to take her place at the piano.

Now Mildred had never been a lover of scales; as a small child she fairly hated them. With her present music teacher she had learned them over again, both in major and minor

keys, and played some of them every day, in two octaves. So she felt quite virtuous on the subject of scales, and ready to try them now.

“At what tempo do you play your scales, my dear?” inquired Her Majesty, laying her white hand on the jeweled metronome standing near.

“I—I don’t know,” stammered Mildred.

“Well, play them your way, without the metronome, and as beautifully as you can.”

Mildred began by playing the scale of *C* up two octaves and back. She could not help but notice that it did not sound very even or smooth.

“Play it four octaves up and down, and much faster,” commanded the Queen.

The girl began again, but the scale was much more uneven than before; her fingers became all tangled up and nothing went right.

“Ah, I see; you have never really studied scales,” remarked Her Majesty, as Mildred went back to her seat.

One and another was now called upon. Mildred listened to what they were doing with growing amazement. Were those really the despised scales, those beautiful runs, that rippled up and down the keyboard—now with power and brilliancy, and now with velvety

softness and lightness? Sometimes they throbbed and swelled with crescendos and diminuendos, like the waves of the sea; then again they tripped up and down in the most delicate of staccatos. She felt as though she had never heard scales before.

The prize for scale playing was won by the girl who had acted as Mildred's guide. It proved to be a set of portraits of great artists; both girls looked over the treasure together.

"I'm so glad to receive this," said the little girl, touching the cover of blue and gold brocade with soft, caressing fingers. "I love pictures, and I have worked so hard over the scales; they are not easy for me."

"I never liked scales, and never thought them pretty," said Mildred, "but I do now, and I mean to practise them all every day, till I can make them sound as beautiful as you do."

"We have to know just how to study them in order to make them sound beautiful; but I s'pose your teacher can show you how," said her companion.

"I suppose so," answered Mildred, a little dubiously.

At the close of the technical contest, many interesting pieces were played; they all seemed to be rendered with expression and charm, and

with fine variety of tone. It was plain even to Mildred, that these pupils studied intelligently, and applied the technic they had acquired to their pieces. She liked it too, that all the compositions were played from memory, as they could be interpreted with so much more freedom. She mentally resolved to learn her favorite pieces by heart, from now on, even though her teacher did not require her to do so.

The audition now being over, all rose, and there was soon a hum of merry talk and laughter. Some gathered about the Queen, to express their thanks and pleasure; others arranged the salon so that there would be free space for dancing. Captivating strains of music from some hidden nook started the nimble feet of the young people, and soon the merry dance was in full swing. Mildred longed to join in, but thought her frock and shoes were not suitable. Suddenly she became conscious that she was garbed in white like the other girls, even down to her little feet. Just then a boy with smiling eyes and animated face came up to her, and in a moment more they had whirled away to join the happy throng of dancers.

How long she danced she never knew; she forgot everything else and enjoyed the happy,

light-hearted pleasures of the moment. After a while there was a lull in the music; and turning her head, she found her little friend at her side.

“The Queen asks me to conduct you safely back, as you might not find the way yourself,” she said sweetly.

Then a strange thing happened. The beautiful salon with its exquisite pictures, its lights and flowers, its perfumes and gay music, its lovely Queen and happy company of dancers, seemed to fade into a pale gray mist, and as Mildred strained her eyes to catch a last glimpse, she found herself trying to pierce the dusk of the May night. She raised her head and the light of the street lamp fell on her face.

Mildred pondered the scenes and experiences of the vision she had had.

“If that was a dream,” she thought, “it was surely the most beautiful and the most sensible dream I ever had. I hope I can profit by its lessons. I am going to try and make my scales ripple and flow as theirs did, my chords ring and echo like theirs, and my tones sing as they seemed to make theirs sing. My! but it was all so beautiful! I’m sure I never heard a piano sound like that before. And the little girl said it was all because the pupils practised their

technical exercises so faithfully and well that they could play their pieces with such fine effect.

“Won’t my teacher be surprised to find me really practising scales and all the rest of the exercises; for I can see now I never really studied these things. I shall work very hard, and then perhaps the little girl will come again and take me to the next class.”

CHAPTER XV.

LETTERS

Helen Richmond to her friend Mary Garford

MY DEAR MARY,

I made an inward resolve to write to you every fortnight, but alas, my acts don't seem to keep pace with my resolves, as you have already found out. Somehow the days slip by unnoticed in this idyllic spot—one cannot tell how nor where. There is a deep content about living and working so quietly, with no interruption or distraction. I'm getting up my repertoire quicker than I thought would be possible, though I don't practise more than three hours a day, as a rule.

In my first letter I told you about my coming down here, and about the children. Oh, the children! They open out like little human flowers in the sunshine of harmony. I began to teach them almost as soon as I arrived, just for the fun of the thing, and now I love to do

it; I wouldn't miss a morning of music games, any more than they would.

The first thing we did was, of course, to learn to hear. We began tapping glasses and finger-bowls at table, to see how many kinds of sounds they could give out. Of course there were various tones, when there was more or less water in the glasses. Then we would go around the rooms tapping chairs, tables, vases, door-knobs—anything and everything—to see what answers we would get. The children thought it great fun. Whenever we passed the piano, I touched middle *C*, for I wanted them to know that one tone, absolutely, if possible. Wherever we were, we listened, to see how many sounds we could hear. Down in a little dell, not far from the house, they heard the birds and tried to sing like them; they listened to the brook and found it had a voice too. They not only learned to listen to sounds and tones, but to rhythms as well, only we didn't use that name at first. Harold's drum came into requisition for this part of the game. We put the drum on a low stool, and each child learned to beat in different ways, first with even taps, then with accents. They also can beat out rhythms on the table, with the tops of their pencils. You remember how much trou-

ble you and I used to have, to train a sense of time into our children, especially into pupils who had had lessons from other teachers. We both realize that Time is as important as Tune; there is as much "ear-training" in listening to rhythms as to sounds. So the two go hand in hand in our morning games.

Almost from the first they began to listen to small pieces on the piano, to learn the names and to sing the melody. Schumann's delightful "Album for the Young" furnishes plenty of material, but I also use little pieces by Grieg, Lange, Florio and others—anything descriptive of flowers, fields, birds or pastimes. I tell them stories about the composers and the pieces, and also that the pieces have names that are just as individual as those of people, and as they know each other's names, so they ought to know the names of the music-pieces. (You see I haven't taught in a young ladies' boarding-school for nothing!)

My brother brought us a sort of xylophone, with the metal slips for keys, and the thing has kept us busy for over a month now; we have done a great deal with it. It has a compass of two octaves; the children have played scales on it (think of that!) and the triads of the key of *C* as well. It's really too cute for anything

to see them form the chords as they do—tapping the keys with the stick and reciting the letters at the same time. You and I were almost grown up before we ever heard of triads, or learned to say them. Just think what advantages the present day children have!

But the very best of all, from their point of view at least, is the box of musical toys, which Mr. Harry Scott presented to us. They are the instruments used for the Kinder Symphonies; but as we are not yet advanced enough to play a Kinder Symphony, we are making use of the little instruments in our various games. If you could hear us and the noises we make, you would realize that the country is the best place to use these things, for they would be somewhat distracting in a town house. Yet rather there than not at all. Some of the toy instruments were new to me, so I had to go off by myself several times, just to experiment with them.

What fun we have had already! The trumpets, of course, are prime favorites with the boys. Phil has the one with eight tones, and can play the scale and make triads like a little major. Harold has the smaller one of four tones, on which he toots with great gusto.

I really think they learn more from the trumpets than from any of the other toys, with the exception of the xylophone, or metallophone, our first love. The little girls use the bells, the nightingale, cricket and cuckoo. At first I brought out only one toy at a time, so that the children shouldn't be confused by an embarrassment of musical riches. For several mornings we worked the trumpets, till they became old friends; then they had the other toys in turn. Before long I let the boys keep the trumpets, so they might play when they liked, except when it disturbed their elders too much.

Besides all this they have learned the names of all the keys on the piano, the sounds of the middle octave, and are now beginning to learn the lines and spaces of the treble staff, which they are decorating with whole notes.

I wish I could give you an idea of the comical things they say—and do! But my letter would then be far too long. Apropos of the funny things, though, I can't resist telling you a little incident about Dorothy, who is a quaintly serious child at times. Not long ago she was the happy recipient of a boy doll, sent her by an aunt. She was delighted, for all her

other children were girls. Then came the question of naming it. To find a suitable name seemed at first very difficult and puzzling. At last she said brightly:

“I know a name, Mamma—I will call him Jesus.”

“Do you really want to call him that, Dorothy?”

“Why shouldn’t I, Mamma? You said you named *me* after some one you loved very much; of course I love Jesus very much, so why can’t I name my new doll after Him?” No amount of argument seemed to convince her that it might not be quite appropriate to do this.

Really, I didn’t mean to make my letter all about the dear children, but perhaps the story of their music games may be helpful to you in your work with children next season. It has given me lots of ideas, for I’ve never had the chance of living constantly with children, of watching them grow, mentally, and of seeing how different ideas strike them—as I have this summer.

Now be sure and have the Chopin Rondo for two pianos ready to play with me, when we meet in the fall.

As always,

YOUR HELEN.

Edith to her Mother

DARLING MAMMA,

I got all the pretty postals you sent me; they are on my wall, in my room, where I can see them as soon as I wake up in the morning. Then I think: Papa and Mamma have been there—and there—and there. Phil and I go up to the White House every morning; we learn to hear all the music toys, the trumpet and the cricket, the cuckoo and the bird song. And there is such a pretty one with cunning little silver bells and red tassels. I like to play on that. I can say the sounds of the toys. Miss Helen says I am a little musician.

The kitty I got is all white. She is very cunning. Phil got one too—his is black. I tie red ribbons on mine.

Do come home quick to
Your loving little

EDITH.

Phil to his Friend Jim

DEAR JIM,

How are you, old fellow? Is it nice where you are? It's great here. Father says I'm

having the time of my life. I guess he's all right. He takes me with him sometimes when he goes fishing. I dig worms, then I put the fish into the basket, when he catches them. He gets beauties sometimes.

Say, you know I said I didn't want to take music lessons 'cause I'd have to practise. Well, I don't b'lieve I'll mind; music's nicer than I thought. Edith and I go up to the Richmonds every morning, and their Aunt Helen shows us about it and tells us a lot of things, and plays on the piano. She lets us play notes on the piano too, and on a queer thing that makes nice sounds and is made out of brass and you play it with a little stick. Then we listen to the birds and other things. If Father'll get a piano I'm going to learn it, so I can play like Miss Helen. Edith and I both have kittens. Spot doesn't fight them at all; guess he's too big to notice them.

You can write soon, to your friend,

PHILIP STURTEVANT SCOTT.

CHAPTER XVI

THE RED BOOK AGAIN

VERY often, on the long summer afternoons, when the children had wakened from their nap, and the ladies from their siesta, Helen was besought to relate one of her music stories. She did not always yield. Sometimes she wanted to be alone with books and music, or free to roam through lane and wood, to think and dream. When in the mood, she entertained them with many bits of fact and fancy from the Red Book. We have her permission to include a couple of the stories in this chapter.

MUSIC STUDY WITHOUT A PIANO

What could be more delightful than the prospect of a three weeks' outing in a big mountain lodge, away up in the very heart of the North Woods? It was the very thing I needed, and had been longing for. And here was a letter just arrived from a dear kind friend, ask-

ing me to join a congenial house party, up in the mountains—the very respite I most wanted. In such a favored spot the overwrought teacher, wearied with the cares and trials of a busy season, might find the longed-for rest, and the relaxation of semi-idleness. I lost no time in accepting the invitation.

O the restfulness, the glory, the delight of those first days among the everlasting hills! It is all beyond words to express. Every hour, nay, every moment, seemed fraught with some new and exquisite surprise.

One fact impressed me as I entered the living-room of Mountain Lodge, for the first time. The great room, with all its comforts and many luxuries, did not boast a piano. Well, what of that? So much the better. Here I, at least, could really forget I had ever touched a piano, or had ever taught it. Here I could give myself up, for the space of three weeks, to the joy of living an ideal life among the clouds.

After a couple of days of pure delight, however, I began to descend to earth, to reflect, and then to grow a bit restless. The claims of art began to assert themselves.

It was at breakfast, on the third morning of my stay. Our *salle à manger* was a wide piazza, whose rough-hewn pillars were twined

with clambering vines. The Lady Hostess had turned to me with a smile.

“I fancy there is a shade in Miss Helen’s usually happy eyes this morning—is it regret? Perhaps she is wishing for her piano; she may even be longing for some pupils to teach.”

“No, not the latter,” I laughed, “for I am very glad to be without the pupils a while. But I do feel that a little time given to study each day will help me appreciate and enjoy this loveliness all the more keenly because my conscience will approve. So I warn you that some new additions to my repertoire will be studied, and some piano technic will be practised for an hour or two each day, even without a piano.”

They all looked at me in astonishment mingled with incredulity, while our Lady Hostess exclaimed:

“Impossible! How will you practise piano technic and new pieces without an instrument?”

“Ah, that is my secret,” I answered. “Yet it is no secret at all when you know how.”

“It’s all very simple,” I went on, enjoying their surprise. “I shall use an ordinary table for my technical practise, which will be all but noiseless, so I promise no one’s siesta will be disturbed. My pieces will be learned mentally,

as I walk in the woods alone, or sit here on this lovely veranda, with the vines climbing around me. My musical studies will not interfere with any of you," I added merrily, looking from one to another.

"What an ingenious idea!" cried the women, while even the men—at least some of them—looked interested.

"May we look at you when you practise?" "Won't you show us how to do it?" "Oh, yes, please do?" chorused the younger set.

"I assure you it's not half so much fun to see how it's done as to do it yourselves. If you really want to try it, and use some of the spare time you have on your hands, I can teach you to play the piano on a table. To do this I shall have to start at the very beginning. If you are good pianists now, it will do you no harm to review those first things that we always seem so anxious to get away from. If, on the other hand, you have never studied at all, we can do quite a little foundation work right here on this table. You will then be much more ready, and no doubt eager, to take up music when you return to the city.

"If you consent to this plan," I continued, seeing they were listening attentively, "I shall be very strict and require punctuality at every

lesson. We might have a little box arranged to collect fines from absentees, should there be any, though I'm sure no one will stay away. We can ask our Lady Hostess if she is willing to have breakfast a little earlier, so we can get our practise in before you start out on your walks. And now, if your courage holds out for twenty-four hours, I will be here to-morrow morning, to welcome all those who are willing to be instructed in the 'mysteries.' ”

Contrary to my expectations, I found quite a class awaiting me when I descended to the piazza the next morning.

There were four girls, three boys, and several “grown-ups,” making about a dozen in all. I was so pleased to see so many ready to take up this new and untried study, that I made them a little speech, saying that if they were really in earnest—as I was—we could accomplish more than they imagined.

“We will have five strings to our bow (instead of two),” I said, counting them over on my fingers. “These five strands will be:

Hearing Sounds
Counting Time
Reading Notes
Physical Exercises
Table Work

“In regard to the first point, hearing sounds, we can, with the aid of my pitch pipe here, locate the tones of the scale; you can also learn to listen to the bird notes of robin and thrush, to the musical drip-drip of any little mountain stream, or to the hum of the grasshopper and katydid. It will be a pleasure to do physical exercises in this pure mountain air and sunshine. As for the finger exercises and all the rest, everything will be made so plain that you can't help but understand. Do you approve the plan?”

All gave smiling assent.

“Now we will begin each day with physical and breathing exercises—for correct breathing has a great deal to do with good piano playing. So first of all we will stand and inhale some of this glorious fresh air, at the same time raising the right arm until it is extended straight out from the shoulder. I will count six, while you hold the breath and the arm out at the same time. Now exhale, and drop your arm, quite limply, to its first position, at your side.”

No one did this correctly, the first time trying, but after a few efforts with each arm in turn, they began to get my idea of relaxation.

We then seated ourselves at the big rustic table, and each guest placed the right arm and

hand upon it. I explained to them the parts of the hand, and showed the three joints for each finger. No one seemed to know the thumb possessed a knuckle joint as well as the fingers.

They were now told to raise the center of the hand, till it formed an arch, and assumed the correct position used in piano playing, taking care that each finger was well curved and in good shape. I passed around the table, correcting mistakes, and showing each one what was the right position and condition. We then proceeded to make simple up and down movements with each finger in turn. With some of my class this proved to be a difficult matter, but they tried to do their best.

During the remainder of the hour, I explained the staff notation and the lines and spaces of the treble clef, using the extended fingers of my right hand to represent an imaginary staff, and having the class call out the letter name of each line or space, as I pointed to it. I also tried to discover how well the class could hear, by asking them to sing tones of various degrees of pitch, with the aid of my tuning fork. Most of my class were very deficient in ability to distinguish the different sounds they heard; so we spent some ten minutes on tone

drill, and were still at it when our Lady Hostess appeared among us.

“What an industrious crowd you are!” she exclaimed. “I see Miss Helen’s miracle has begun in good earnest.”

Next morning all my “pupils” were in their places, and seemed quite eager to begin. Several other guests came to look on, and one more joined our ranks. We went over the same ground as the day before, which they understood better the second time. Especial attention was given to the listening exercises.

I sent at once for my metronome and sight-reading charts, and before long the class became quite proficient in reciting notes on treble and bass staff, and also the notes placed on leger lines above and below the staff. Their hearing improved very much with the little daily drill.

Perhaps the best work was done with the table exercises. I taught each one by precept and example. We moved the fingers singly and in pairs or threes, playing trills, passages, scales and arpeggios. We learned the principles of chord formation, and became quite proficient in playing chords of many varieties. We also recited these chords in all possible

keys, which isn't at all difficult, if you know the rule.

Our Host himself became so much interested in the doings of our early class that he arranged a big table for us out under the trees at the side of the Lodge; here we usually worked, unless the morning proved stormy.

The members of the class were soon willing to do a little practise outside of the morning lesson. They seemed to relish this novel manner of acquiring piano technic, and wanted to progress faster; they assured me they meant to continue their musical studies as soon as they returned to the city. As for myself, I was not idle, for I memorized a certain amount daily on the pieces I had brought with me, besides doing a lot of technic.

My vacation came to an end all too soon, before I even realized it. On the evening before my departure, the music class gave a demonstration of what they had learned in three weeks.

First came a whole set of physical and breathing exercises, which they all did with great gusto and relish. Then came staff reading and singing, then reciting scales and chords. Lastly came table exercises for fingers, arm

movements, scales and chords, all played to the beat of the metronome.

All the guests were enthusiastic over what had been accomplished in such a short time. The Lady Hostess clapped her hands vigorously, and exclaimed:

“Miss Helen has wrought her miracle after all! She has taught you how to begin to play the piano, even without the use of an instrument. So she has kept her promise, and we all thank her!”

IN MUSIC LAND

Aurora was trying to write her harmony lesson, but her thoughts would wander from those dry rules that seemed to stare up at her from the printed pages of the book lying open on her lap. The long windows of the pretty room in which she sat opened into a small garden, now in freshest leaf, and fragrant with spring blossoms.

Aurora looked out at the green garden with longing.

“I wish I didn’t have to write these tiresome exercises,” she thought; “but teacher thinks the study of harmony will help me to understand music a little better. I don’t think it will, for I really don’t care much for music anyway—

at least not the kind I make. It would be different if I could hear a lot of fine music, and some great players and singers; but nothing great ever comes to this little village. I wonder how a famous artist would play the Mozart sonata, for instance, that I have to learn. Mozart himself was a fine pianist, they say, and composed music when he was a little boy, only six years old. He lived in a beautiful old city, with mountains all around it. I know just how it looks.”

Aurora rose from her chair, stepped out through the long window into the sunshine and looked about her. Then she slipped into a cosy nook shaded by a tall lilac tree in full bloom. Her thoughts began to wander out beyond the fragrant garden to the quaint old town which had been the birthplace of the wonder child, Mozart, and of which she possessed several pictures.

Before she quite knew how it happened, she found herself walking along a mossy road, bordered on each side by tall trees, that interlaced their branches overhead until they formed a wonderful green archway, extending as far as eye could reach, until at last it ended in a mere speck of green. Aurora wondered where the mossy road would lead her, if she kept on walk-

ing in it. Just then her gaze fell on a small guide-post, on which, in letters of gold, stood the words: "The Road to Music Land." A hand pointed in the direction in which she was going. She therefore decided to keep right on till she found the Land of Music, though the distance seemed very great.

"What can Music Land be like?" she thought to herself. "Will everybody know how to play and sing? Will each house be filled with musical instruments? Will each house have plenty of music, and will everybody love music, even boys and girls? Nobody hating to practise, but just loving to do it. Maybe the children in Music Land do not have to practise, because they know music without study. Perhaps everything makes music, even the furniture in the houses." Aurora suddenly remembered a particular footstool, which was one of the treasures of her Aunt's house. This footstool had a music box inside of it, that played tunes whenever you sat upon it, or stepped on it. The thought occurred to her that perhaps all the furniture of the houses in Music Land might be of this pattern, and have the same attachments.

"Wouldn't it be funny," she thought, "if a whole roomful of people sat on music box

chairs, each one playing a different tune, at the same time." But she repudiated this idea as a discordant one, for she was sure everything in Music Land must be harmonious.

Thus musing, she walked on and on, a long distance on the green path. Just as she was beginning to wonder if it would ever come to an end, she noticed that the road seemed to broaden and widen. Almost before she realized the change, it had become a pleasant park; the greensward was dotted with stately trees, whose trunks were twined with flowering vines. In some places the vines reached out to trees near by, thus making festoons of color and fragrance. Not far away a group of young people danced on the green, as they sang a merry song; the boys looked like picturesque young shepherds; the thin white garments of the girls fluttered in the light breeze, as they swung around the circle. Artistic looking men and women in pairs or small groups walked about or sat on wide benches under the trees. Stately white buildings gleamed through the foliage here and there; farther away a blue lake glistened in the sun.

Aurora stood quite still, and caught her breath at the beauty of the scene. All was so peaceful, yet animated; birds sang joyously in

the trees, the air was full of fragrance; the people had such happy faces; a faint music seemed to come from a distance.

A young woman was seated on a low bench under a tree; Aurora went over and sat down beside her.

“Do you live here?” she asked, glancing at the woman’s homespun gown and toil-worn hands.

“No, but I often come to get a little inspiration. I wanted to come to-day, for I was so tired; it always makes me happy to come here, and rests me so much.” Her face wore a peaceful look, and she smiled brightly on Aurora as she continued:

“There is always music to be heard, in one of the great halls, and it costs nothing to listen. All the famous musicians live and work here, and there is wonderful music to hear all the time—every day. And it is all free to those who love it enough to come and get the benefit. Is that why you came?” she asked suddenly, turning her happy face toward the girl.

“I don’t know; I just happened to find the way. But it wasn’t because I love music so very much, for I’m afraid I don’t—at least I don’t love to practise, and I never heard a great musician play in all my life.”

“If you could find your way here, that shows that you love music a little and wish to find happiness in it,” answered the woman.

Aurora rose and started to walk on; she could not sit still; she felt she must go farther and find out more.

A little farther on she came upon a boy pacing to and fro under one of the trees. He held a notebook, in which he jotted down ideas from time to time.

“And why are you here?” she exclaimed, almost involuntarily, as she came up to him and looked into his fine, expressive face.

“I came to study with the Master Beethoven. He lives here, and all his works—all he ever wrote—are carefully preserved in the great library yonder. I am writing a symphony; it is to be called *Morning, Noon and Night*. The master will look it over when it is finished—he has promised it. I have just thought of a lovely theme for Noonday.” And the boy turned an ecstatic face to his questioner. “But I might ask you the same question—why you are here; you don’t look as if you cared very much for music; for you see, if we do care, it shows in our faces.”

“I should like to care, if I only knew how,”

said Aurora. "But I have never heard any fine music in all my life."

"Then you have come to the right place to hear it," returned the boy; "and I'm sure you can learn to care, if you get the chance. To-day you will have a treat, for Mozart himself will play some of his piano Sonatas, so that we who are anxious to know, can learn how he wished them to be performed. Most people play them so badly that they are ruined."

"Oh, tell me, where will he play them?" asked Aurora, quite breathlessly.

"Over there, in that Greek Temple, which you can see through the trees. He will begin in an hour's time. You will not be at all surprised at his appearance, for he looks just like his pictures. Only, instead of using a little spinet or harpsichord, he will play on a large, beautiful piano."

"Can I hear him too?" demanded Aurora.

"Surely; the best music is always free here for those who desire it."

"Tell me," questioned the girl, "are all the children in Music Land required to practise so many hours a day, or do they know music without study? And does all the furniture and everything in the houses make music?"

"What a ludicrous idea; what could have put

that into your head?" laughed the boy, his brown eyes beaming with merriment. "Of course we have to study hard, if we want to learn the art of music; but we all love to do it. And loving it, and working in earnest, and in the right way, we learn very quickly, and do not have to unlearn. The instructors teach thoroughly and show you the meaning of music and how to learn to love it, if you don't love it as soon as you are born. Besides, if you can compose, you may attract the notice of some great master, who will aid your studies. Then here you can listen to the greatest artists. In the libraries is to be found all the good music that has ever been written. If any composition is not found here, that is proof that it is not worthy. We study and hear only the very best music. But I must write down the ideas that have come, even while I have been talking to you. If you will walk around a bit till it is time for the concert, I will join you and we can sit together."

During the next half-hour Aurora discovered many wonderful things. After a while she found herself in a broad avenue, lined on each side by most artistic looking houses. The center of the avenue was laid out with flower-beds, interspersed with fountains. At the end of the

avenue rose the Greek Hall, which was the Temple of Music referred to by the boy. Aurora walked slowly, trying to see everything as she passed. Here and there strains sung by sweet voices made her pause; again at other moments the tones of a piano played by a master hand would float out, or perhaps it was the heart-searching melody of a violin.

As she neared the Temple of Music the boy joined her, and together they entered. The interior of the structure was as simple and beautiful in line and ornament as the outside of the building appeared to her. The whole space looked as though cut out of old ivory. A delicately tinted dome of glass shed a rosy light over all. Softly cushioned seats rose in semi-circle throughout the auditorium, now nearly filled by an expectant throng. The two young people found places near the podium. The boy carried under his arm copies of the music to be played. Many others did the same.

“Perhaps you would rather just listen, without looking on,” he remarked to his companion; “but I shall mark down the interpretation, so that I shall have a record of just how the master plays his music.”

Then, as all sat quietly, with reverent expectation, the master entered and began to play.

The very first number was the sonata which Aurora had been struggling to learn. Could it really be the very same? she asked herself. What clearness and precision, what delicate crispness, what accents and shading! How pearly the touch, how the scales and passages rippled and laughed, like the waters of the lake out yonder, that she had seen dimpling in the sun. It seemed like quite another piece altogether; the ideas were so simple, so clearly arranged, that for the first time she could grasp their meaning with ease. She felt as if she were looking at a lovely landscape from a mountain-top; all the parts could be seen in their relation to each other as well as to the whole. And the instrument itself did not sound like a piano, at least not the kind she was familiar with. It was all fascinating. Aurora hung on every note with almost breathless excitement. So that was really her piece; who could imagine it was really so beautiful! She determined to listen intently to every shade of meaning and effect, so that when she got back to her piano, she might try to reproduce them. At the close of the sonata, she turned a pair of shining eyes upon her companion, who returned the glance with interest.

The master played on and on—sonatas, ron-

dos, fantasies; each one proved a revelation to Aurora. She felt as though scales had fallen from her eyes, and her ears had been unstopped. She glanced about her at the upturned faces of the listeners. They seemed to be entirely oblivious to everything around them. Some sat with their eyes closed, as if entranced. The thought suddenly flashed through her mind: "These people are transported into another world—a world of tones; they can live in this magic world because they love music; that's why they are here. That's why I am here, too, because I also begin to love music. Oh, it makes me happy." She closed her eyes in order to listen more completely.

When she opened them, she did not see the classic Greek Hall and the great audience of silent worshipers. She only saw the pretty garden, flooded with May sunshine, just as it had been an hour ago.

Aurora sat still in her fragrant nook, for a long time, thinking over her trip to Music Land and what she had seen and heard there. Then she got up and went into the house. She walked straight to her piano and began to practise the Mozart sonata with a will. Each hand alone this time, counting aloud, watching each phrasing mark and every direction for touch. With

much care and patience order was brought out of the former chaos, until finally the first page took on a little of the shape and meaning she had in mind.

Nor was she satisfied to improve the first page only; the whole sonata underwent a thorough clearing up, until it began to sound really beautiful to her and gave pleasure to every one in the home.

It is safe to affirm that Aurora never again practised heedlessly and without care.

For the vision of the wonderful Land of Music was ever with her, and whenever she wished it very much, she could revisit its sylvan glades and hear again its inspired strains.

CHAPTER XVII

THE HEAR CLUB

“IF there is one subject I am interested in more than another—as you already know—it is listening and hearing,” remarked Helen to her friends one afternoon. “Besides keeping this point ever in view in my private teaching, I often have classes in listening and musical analysis. I have here a little account of how I handled one of these classes, which I called, for the humor of the thing, *The Hear Club*. Perhaps this true story may interest you.” She turned over the pages of the Red Book and began:

Among the aspects of piano study which do not receive the consideration they deserve, this one, of not being trained to listen and *hear*, stands out glaringly. You may ask how it is possible for the piano student not to hear what sounds he is producing. It is quite possible; nine out of ten ordinarily instructed piano pu-

pils can prove it to you with the greatest ease. They have done this ever since they began to take lessons. They have been taught—and rightly too—that they must always put the correct finger on the right note, must hold hands and arms in a certain way, must use the “loud pedal” to make more noise, and so on through the list of half a dozen other requirements. These things, together with the fact that the player must grasp eight or ten keys at the same instant and play with great rapidity, so take up his attention that he has no time to listen as he should, or really to hear. Besides, why should he bother himself about tone production, anyway? Leave such woes to singers and players of instruments not provided with such handy keys as the piano.

It is quite true that singers and violinists have their own troubles in forming and producing their tones. How they must labor and think before they are able to make even one good tone! But that one tone, the result of so much careful thought, is morally worth more than all the keys the piano-player has so thoughtlessly depressed, punched or pounded. Why? Because that tone is the result of thought directed to the right spot. You may ask again: “Why cannot the piano student be-

stow like thought on *his* tone production?" He can, but as a rule he doesn't, for he is not taught that way. The keys are there; all he has to do is to touch them and the corresponding sounds result.

A well-known pianist and teacher once said to me: "Did it ever occur to you how far the average student will go out of his way to avoid thinking?" Thinking requires considerable effort; the average student wants to get along with as little effort as possible.

One might say a few things to excuse the poor, maligned piano student. His instrument is so easy to play. Anybody can put keys down; it doesn't need high-priced instruction to tell him this. Then he often has so many notes to play and must do them at such rapid tempo that there is little time to think of tone-quality. He may be thinking in a way, but it is not the intelligent way in which he might think, if his thought had been directed to the right channels at the beginning.

Of course this reverts to his early training and to his first teacher. If I could say what is in my heart to say on this point, there would be no space left to say anything else. I must take up the subject of hearing at any stage at which the pupil comes to me. Any teacher who

believes it is absolutely necessary to train the ear as well as the fingers must do the same.

Let us suppose (my case exactly) that the teacher has a normal class of young players before him, to whom he must apply some kind of awakening, arousing process that will cause them to open their ears and minds to the wonders of the world of sound.

There are perhaps fifteen or twenty in the class; they have come from all corners of the country. Some are teachers with a long record behind them, others have but just entered the path. There may be some brilliant pianists among them; and all, even the least advanced, have for years made a study of piano music. They have come together to obtain new ideas, to hear and analyze old and new compositions, to become acquainted with what is latest on the subject of teaching and playing. In the mind of the instructor such students should be able to profit by a class in musical analysis. They indeed desire to do so; but, alas, they cannot hear. Some almost appear to be tone deaf. They are not really deaf, you must know, but they have never learned to hear intelligently, with the mental ear.

The teacher about to instruct this class, fired with enthusiasm to reveal to their enraptured

thought the beauties of classic and modern piano literature, must find himself unexpectedly at a standstill. Here he comes, with his Bach, Beethoven, and Chopin under his arm. He expects to give them solid meat first and perhaps later on a taste of the romantic, the soulful and poetic. As he stands before the class ready to carry out his exalted plan, it occurs to him to test the musical ear of the members before offering them Bach. So he makes some simple tests; after each one he finds his spirits sinking lower and lower, until at last he realizes that these people, who have been "in music" for years, cannot hear with any degree of understanding whatever. Therefore, instead of playing a Bach Invention to illustrate imitative and contrapuntal styles, or a Beethoven First Movement to illustrate the sonata form, he finds he must get right down to the bottom and teach them to hear.

He explains first of all that, as the members of the class desire to be judges of good music as well as good judges of music, they must realize that music is composed of rhythm, melody and harmony, form, feeling and spirit. Each of the parts into which music can be divided is spoken of at length.

"But," continues the teacher, "before you

can profit by what I am talking about, and really understand it, you must first learn to hear. We will form ourselves into 'The Hear Club' right away, and I will put each member to work at once.

"First of all, can you tell the tonality or key in which these little pieces are written?" Half a dozen simple melodies are played, using tonic and dominant harmonies. Not one of the class can hear these keys with any certainty, though several guesses are made.

"You study harmony? Let me see if you can hear the triads of the scale as I play them. The tonic is major, yes; then come two minors and a major. Very good. Now another major, two minors, and then the seventh triad—minor? No, not that exactly—a little less; that is to say, two minor thirds. A minor third includes four keys, and this chord is composed of two of these little thirds. As some one suggests, it is a diminished triad. You will soon learn to recognize this particular triad, no matter in what part of the keyboard it is played, or in what tonality it occurs.

"Let us go farther back than the triad—back to the single tone. Every member of the Club must be able to name by ear any tone from middle *C* to the next *C* above, within a

week. I might say membership rests on this condition. I will now play various tones at random within this space, and see how many you can distinguish. Ah! Yes, you are beginning to hear a little better already. I shall expect each one to practise listening to tones and making them with the voice every day. The only way you can train the ear on these single tones, unassisted, is to start with the lowest, then think and sing the next above, before playing it. Suppose you touch middle *C* as a starter. Think and sing *D*. Play *C* again, then think and sing *E*, and so on up the scale, always returning to *C* and singing the various intervals in turn before verifying them by touching the note in question. A second form is to begin on the *C* above and go down the scale in the same manner. Select one tone which is easy for your voice, say middle *E* or *F*; determine you will know the pitch of that note without fail by this time next week. Strive to fix that tone in your mind; think it, sing it, as you pass near the piano; then touch the key to find out how near you can come to the correct pitch, from memory. You can thus teach yourself absolute pitch.

“As we are becoming slightly familiar with single tones, let us try whole and half steps,

also large and small thirds. I will play a number of each and you can answer 'whole' or 'half,' 'large' or 'small.' Think of the major intervals as bright and happy, as light and gay; of the small intervals as dark and often sad.

"That is very well—your hearing is certainly improving wonderfully already. You could really have learned to hear years ago, if you had only tried!

"Next week I will review these tests and give you much harder ones. See to it that you do good work at home and become worthy members of 'The Hear Club.' "

At the conclusion of the lesson the members express their approval of the Club.

"It's just what we need," says one.

Another remarks: "I've studied the piano for a long time under a foreign master and have taught for years myself, but I must confess I've never learned to hear; it will be a great help to me if I can learn now."

"One cannot get these things in private lessons," says a third; "one must make a special study of them."

"Every piano student should be taught to hear from the very start," asserts the instructor. "Then he would play the piano with far more intelligence; he would treat it as a musi-

cal instrument, not merely as a thing of wood and metal. What I say to you I repeat to every player and teacher: *Learn to hear!*"

Let us follow the instructor for a few lessons and see how he trains his pupils to hear.

After the drill in single tones, he takes whole and half steps, which are played in the middle octave. Then major and minor thirds are explained. Students who have never before thought how such intervals would sound when heard outside of a piece, are made to listen to them over and over again until the sounds are fixed in their consciousness.

Three lessons are spent with the class in practise of single tones, intervals and the four kinds of triads. These are alternately played, sung and written down. The writing causes much amusement; it is a sort of musical guessing game at first, but soon better results are obtained.

At the fourth meeting of the class, after the usual drill in tones and intervals, little melodies are played, listening to and written down by sound. These bits of melody are extremely simple, sometimes consisting of only a few notes, but they seem difficult to those who have never before tried to locate sounds.

The important part played by the cadence

is dwelt upon, and the necessity for recognizing in its recurrence the breathing places in music, the points of repose, which arrest the general onward progression of a composition. The class learns to recognize the various forms of the cadence, and finds how they punctuate the text of the musical language.

The two methods of musical construction are next considered: namely, thematic and lyric; the first developed from one or more germs or texts, the other consisting of a flowing melody, singing itself like a song. Many illustrations of both forms are played.

A Beethoven First Movement can now be considered. The selection chosen happens to be Op. 2, No. 1, in which the three subjects are so clearly set forth. Another First Movement is that from Op. 14, No. 2, that charming duet between two lovers. The class is now able to recognize the various themes, their repetition and working out.

After this the class takes up the subject of Variations; the illustrations include several from Beethoven's sonatas, his *Andante Favori* and the set in C minor; Haydn's *Theme and Variations* in F minor; Rameau in A minor; Mozart's in the same key; and Brahms' *Varia-*

tions on a Handel theme. Imitation and fugue forms are illustrated from Bach.

Chopin and Schumann are frequently drawn upon. As the class improves in hearing and perception, more complicated forms come up for analysis: pleasure and profit increase with added understanding.

If all students of the piano could be aroused to realize that they must learn to hear, it would go a long way toward making them better musicians. There should be a "Hear Club" established by every teacher. If his time is too largely filled to admit of his undertaking it, he should see to it that his pupils study hearing and analysis under a special teacher.

CHAPTER XVIII

RESULTS

THE summer waned; the long days were becoming shorter, and there was a touch of crispness in the early morning and evening air, for August was already half gone. But there seemed no lagging of interest in the morning music games up at the White House; if anything, the enthusiasm increased as the days went by. There was so much variety now in the study that there was no room for monotony.

Helen Richmond was very happy over the success of her experiment. It was the first time she had had the opportunity to work out her pet theories with those who were not really "taking lessons" on the piano. Even if these children should never learn to play the piano—a very unlikely supposition—the effort to listen to and locate sounds of all kinds, and the alertness this effort had created, would be of the greatest benefit in the world to them.

As she thought over all the various "games" they had played during the past weeks, she made a mental inventory of what had been accomplished. Each child had proved an interesting study; one had excelled in one thing, another in quite a different thing.

Dorothy had an excellent ear for tone, and could name most of the notes in the middle octave. In this she was only second to Phil, who was even more accurate, for he knew many half-tones as well as whole ones. Dorothy was not quite so successful in the time exercises, as her sense of time had not kept pace with her sense of tone, in accuracy.

Edith was ahead of her in this. Edith had a mathematical streak in her composition; time divisions seemed simple for her. Without realizing how, she had absorbed the principle of fractions, for she was able to beat correctly *Number Ten*, as the little exercise was called. This exercise consisted of one, two, three, and four taps respectively, to each beat of the metronome. Edith found she could surpass her playmates in this, and had been greatly pleased at the discovery. She announced one day that she loved *Number Ten* so much she could kiss it! She also could do the finger exercises very correctly, for she had an excellent hand, and

was able to place it in the best position and make the best movements.

Little Harold's *métier* seemed to be the drum, though he got along very well with the toy trumpet.

All four children had learned to make the graceful arm and wrist movements, which they would need later on, when they came to play chords on the piano. They used the movement now, combined with one finger, to play single notes. With the second finger of the right hand held in curved position, the other fingers raised to be out of the way, or closed lightly into the palm, the children could play on the piano most of the scales, or "tone ladders," as they called them—for scale means ladder. Then there were all of the triads and finger movements they knew, to say nothing of the various pieces with which they were familiar. Truly they had learned a great deal.

Helen was thinking it all over as she sat at her window, on a sunshiny August morning. All at once, outside her door, there was let loose a whole orchestra of sounds—drum, trumpets, cymbals and nightingale, all sounding at once, together with lusty child voices.

"Oh, Aunty Helen, come!" they cried. "It's time for the music games. Come down!"

“Yes, yes, dears; go down and get your places at the table—I’ll be there in a moment.”

The orchestra forthwith descended the stairs, still in full force. Phil was leading, and his small trumpet cut the air with its *C-E-G-C*.

Helen joined them a few moments later.

“Who can hear the best this morning?” was her first question. “Don’t all speak at once, as I see you are going to. Just listen quietly a moment—so—then Edith can begin; I’ll write down the four answers.”

Silence for the space of twenty seconds, by the watch.

Edith: “I hear a robin up in the tree, a grasshopper down there in the grass, and the leaves of the trees making a least little bit of a noise.”

Phil: “There’s a wagon coming along the road, and I hear the horses’ feet, and something’s the matter with one of ’em.”

Dorothy: “I hear Spot barking somewhere, and I think I hear a weeny, weeny mosquito.” Everybody laughed at this.

Harold: “O dear, I haven’t any new ones, ’cept I hear Betty in the kitchen making a noise with the dishes.”

“That’s very well, children; your ears are ‘unbuttoned this morning,’ as Uncle Harry

would say. But don't you hear the sheep just across the road on the slope, and the men mowing over in the field, and those sparrows chirping out there on the lawn? Only think of all these sounds going on at the same instant! And I'm sure there are just as many more sounds that we can't hear, for they are so fine and delicate that they escape our notice. But that will do to-day, for the nature-listening. Now, all together, let us recite the triads of the key of *C*. Very good!

"Let's do the new ones now, the triads of the key of *G*. Good again!

"Next we will let Phil play the ladder of *G* on the xylophone. By the way, how does it go, Dorothy?"

"Step, step, half-step; step, step, step, half-step," answered the little maiden.

"Right! Phil can tap it first here, and then Edith can play the notes with one finger on the piano; don't forget the graceful wrist and arm motion, girlie.

"Children, you remember the ladder of *G* has a black step in it; you learned the other day that this black note is *F* sharp. Which one of you can make the sign for a sharp? You, Phil? All right, you can try it, while Dorothy tells me what the sharp sign does?"

“It *highers* the note half a step.”

“You have the right idea, girlie, but you don’t say it quite correctly,” assented Helen, repressing a smile. Then she explained over again.

“Now let us all recite the triads of *G*; we will be careful about the sharp.”

When this had been done correctly, they talked about the triads of *G*, and then about the major and minor triads in the ladder of *C*. The difference in sound was shown them—the bright and cheerful quality of the major, and the somewhat sad and dark quality of the minor triad. So they learned to call out “light” or “dark,” respectively, when a major or a minor triad was played by Helen on the piano.

After they had recited the triads of these two keys, each one in turn played a ladder of tones on the piano. They were played with one finger, to be sure, but the wrist and arm movements were easy and graceful. As they had learned the simple formula of the scale, they found they could make these scale-ladders on any key they chose to begin with. Phil was able to make them all, though he could not tell the signatures: these were to be learned later. The little girls could play the scale lad-

ders that begin on a white key, and even Harold could do *C* and *G* without a mistake.

When they played the notes on the piano, Helen constantly reminded them to listen to the tones, to see whether they sounded rough and harsh, or sweet and mellow.

“Play with gentle touch,” she would say. “Caress the keys, as you would stroke the fur on the back of your kitten. You love kitty, and you love the pretty piece of ivory that responds to your caress by giving out such a sweet sound. Let me see which of you can make the most lovely tone on the piano?”

As has been said, they could hold their hands in fairly good position at the table, with knuckles up and fingers curved. They could play one stroke of the finger to the metronome beat, or two, or even three, as the case might be. In this it was Edith who excelled. Her position was the best, her finger movements, up and down, the most accurate, her idea of two or three notes to a beat the most exact.

This morning the class had some drill on the notes of the treble staff. Using an extended position of her right hand to represent the lines and spaces of the staff, Helen pointed to different fingers, or to the spaces between them, and asked for the letters of the notes belonging

on them. She had also fashioned a chart of white cardboard, on which she had drawn a staff, with a treble clef sign, much over "life size" Through the staff she had cut a slit in the cardboard, which slanted across the staff. Into this slit she inserted the shank of a large black stud, which she slid up and down, stopping it wherever she wanted the letter of a line or space recited. The children watched the erratic movements of the black button, so as to be ready to call out the answer when it stopped anywhere; it was great fun to see who could say the note first. They could also find the staff notes on the piano. Sometimes one child at the piano would give the answer to the movements of the black button on the cardboard chart, which Helen held in her hand.

"Now, children, as you have played all the games so well this morning, you may march for five minutes, and then I'll play four little pieces on the piano—one for each of you—and you can each choose what they shall be."

As they came to a halt, after some lively marching, and sat in their little chairs, they had their minds made up for the pieces.

"I choose the March from Lohengrin," announced Phil.

"And I'd like *Uncle Remus*," said Edith,

who was just then reading those fascinating stories.

Dorothy wanted Grieg's *Little Bird*, while Harold clung to his first love, *The Jolly Farmer*.

"Are we going to have a music party before we go back to the city?" asked Phil, when the playing was over.

"Would you like it?"

"Yes, I think it'd be jolly; we know such a lot of things to do now."

"We can really let people watch our games any morning—they always like to see them. But for a real music party, to close up with—well, I shall have to put my thinking cap on for that, to get up something a little new, and—different—"

Just then Mr. Scott's voice was heard on the veranda:

"Where are those children?"

"Oh, there's Father!" cried Phil, while the others shouted, "Uncle Harry, Uncle Harry!" and all rushed out and flung themselves upon him.

CHAPTER XIX

AN EVENING ON THE VERANDA

IT was a still, beautiful evening toward the end of August. The day had been sultry, but after sundown a slow, soft breeze arose, and moved gently, listlessly through the trees, barely stirring leaves and blossoms here and there. A whippoorwill's plaintive note was heard now and then in the distance, and occasionally a night butterfly trailed by on silver wings. It was a night for poets to chant of in most enraptured strain, and for a musician—to play Chopin.

The atmosphere of enchantment filled Helen Richmond's thought as she sat alone on the veranda, drinking in the fragrant beauty of the night. Then she rose and went to the piano; soon Chopin's wonderful harmonies floated out to mingle with the fragrant odors that the warm night wind was slowly carrying abroad.

After a time voices were heard on the veranda. Helen closed the piano and came out to join the others.

“Not many days left of this idyllic life,” observed Mr. Scott, stretching out his long legs, as he leaned back in his chair, with his hands clasped behind his head. “I’m glad you told us about this place, Richmond, for I’ve never regretted our coming down here.”

“There’s no reason why we shouldn’t all come here again next summer, if nothing prevents,” said Herbert Richmond.

“We didn’t know, when we decided to take the cottage for the summer, that we should find such exceptional musical advantages here,” said Mrs. Scott, with an affectionate pat on Helen Richmond’s hand, as she sat near her.

Helen gave her a flashing smile. Then, as no one spoke for a moment, she said:

“Dear Mrs. Scott, I have really done nothing but what was my pleasure to do. I believe I’ve had more fun out of it all than the children themselves. And although I have given some little time and perhaps more thought to it than you might suppose, I’ve been rewarded a hundredfold.”

“I did not realize so much could be done with those babies,” remarked Marianne. “I’ve watched them grow and expand, just as flowers open out in the sun; I see no reason why they should not begin their music lessons in

earnest this fall. What do you think, Helen?"

"There's nothing to prevent, if you wish it, and are willing to devote just a little time to looking after their practise. Music has been play for them this summer, but they will have to learn that it can't always be just play and nothing else."

"If they love it, they must be willing to give up something for it," remarked her brother.

"Yes, exactly; they really have learned to love the music, and I think they will be ready to give a little of their play time to study the lessons."

"It would indeed be a pity, a great pity, to have everything stop now, after so good a beginning," said Mrs. Scott.

"The only thing to do is to have them begin right away—all four of them—as soon as we get back to town," said Mr. Scott, with authority; "then there will hardly be a break, and they can go right on as they have been going."

"What do you say to that, my Helen?" asked her brother. He leaned over to look into her face, as the moonlight shone on it.

"I'm ready to undertake it, though it's a great responsibility, as you said yourself, at the beginning of the summer."

“Settled!” was the answer, as he looked around at the others with a satisfied nod.

“Phil asked to-day if we were going to have another ‘music party’ before we leave here,” said Helen, gazing straight before her, toward the moon-lighted lawn.

“Bless their little hearts—I suppose they’d really like it,” said Mrs. Scott.

“I told them,” went on Helen, “that we would let you all come any morning and watch their games, but that if we had a real ‘party,’ we would have to think up something unique.”

“Yes, let’s get up something quite different from anything we have done before, can’t we?”

“What shall it be? Can you suggest some scheme, Mary? You are great for ideas on such points.”

“How would it be if we concocted some kind of a dialogue or play, in which each child shall have a part; perhaps a musical playlet, or at least something on that order?”

“A musical playlet?” cried Helen with enthusiasm. “The very thing! But what shall it be about, and where can we get characters enough?”

“Sure enough; we can’t expect those kiddies to do a great deal—we must help them out.”

“They can do something, of course; they can

play the leading rôles," said Mrs. Scott. "By the way, I've invited two old school friends of mine to spend next week with us; it's our last you know. If they come, I'm sure they will enter into the plan with ardor, and be glad to assist." And she smiled brightly in anticipation.

"I might have sister Jane down," remarked Marianne; "she is a host in herself."

"Why, with all these," cried Helen, "there will be plenty of help, and of audience, too. Herbert can ask a friend or two out from the city that evening, if you find you want any more. Then we know several of the families staying here for the summer, so I'm sure we shall have enough players and listeners."

"Now for the play—what shall it be?" Harry Scott looked around on the group.

A long pause ensued. At last Helen spoke:

"If I thought you wouldn't make too much fun at my expense, I'd own up to having written a little sketch the other day, just for practise. Perhaps you will find it has no value, but we can talk it over and maybe the five of us together can make something out of it. I'll consult my literary brother," with an arch smile in his direction, "and if he doesn't condemn my

effusion to the waste-basket, then we can all look it over together."

"The very thing!" cried Mary Scott. "This is Friday; we can look it up to-morrow and the next day, as the men will be at home. Then the party can be next week Saturday night, and there will be one week in between."

"Oh, my playlet is a very simple little affair," Helen assured them, "and won't need much preparation."

"What's the idea of it?" inquired Herbert.

"I have called it *The Voice of Music*. Perhaps *The Soul of Music* might be better. It is an attempt to show what music means to different people; but the thing is hardly more than an outline as it stands. You see the children must be in it, and I didn't think of them when I wrote it; I must put them in now."

"They must certainly take part, and the 'orchestra' ought to be represented too."

"The trumpets, with the boys attached, might be heralds, used to usher in the other characters," observed her husband, with a humorous chuckle.

"The very thing!" assented Helen with enthusiasm; "that will make them feel they are doing something important. We'll find little parts for the girls, too."

“Where can we give it; here on the veranda, or out on the lawn?”

“As we shall need the piano, we’ll have to use the veranda—don’t you think so?” Helen answered, looking around the group. “The veranda is so long, as well as wide—it will do nicely for our purpose. The spectators, if there are many, can all sit at one end. But we really don’t care whether any one sees us or not; we just want to have our own fun out of it.”

So much being settled, the talk drifted into other channels. Long the little group sat chatting, while the soft night wind, grown a bit fresher now, wafted to them the scent of rose and honeysuckle, and those busy night lamps, the fireflies, trailed their jeweled lights through the grasses and shrubbery. All were loath to break the magic spell of time and place; until at last, some one inadvertently mentioned the lateness of the hour. Then with low-toned exclamations, regrets and good-nights, they separated.

CHAPTER XX

THE SOUL OF MUSIC

THE closing week of August proved to be a very busy and crowded one. Friends were staying at both villas, and several picnics were enjoyed. Had we time and space, it would be pleasant to tell of the excursion up the ravine, miles away, to which they all drove in a big country carryall; how Phil's trumpet woke the slumbering echoes hidden away among the rocks, and how the children learned various qualities of sound they had not met with before. Or we might have gone with them the day they went to Sylvan Lake, where the lovely grove lies, that creeps right down to the water's edge. There we could have watched them do some of their music games among its fairy glades. They heard other bird voices there, which their ever thoughtful and loving young teacher turned to fullest account.

The looked-for last Saturday finally arrived, and proved itself to be as perfect a day as ever had been known there, within the memory of

the oldest inhabitant. And the night was neither too hot nor too cool; there was air enough, yet not too much wind: it was indeed a glorious night.

Artistic hands had converted one end of the veranda at Hillcrest into a pretty boudoir, with easy chairs, a divan piled with bright cushions, a table at one side and the piano at the other. Gay colored lanterns gleamed among the flowering vines around the whole length of the veranda, and were also hung about the lawn, from trees and shrubs, wherever they could be placed to advantage.

As soon as dusk had fallen, people began to assemble at the White House. The children, refreshed by an extra long nap in the afternoon, were in hilarious mood, at the bare thought of "staying up" with their elders, and seemed to be everywhere at once.

A few young people from the summer colony had been asked to assist in the playlet, and a young girl who played well was selected to preside at the piano. The audience disposed itself at the other end of the veranda, or on the lawn, as it preferred.

When all was ready, the piano played some of Mendelssohn's fairy-like music, and then

Helen, a tall, graceful figure, in Greek draperies, came slowly through the long window, and moved to the center of the improvised music-room. Her fair hair was bound with a golden fillet twined with laurel, and she carried a golden lyre. A moment she stood silent, with rapt, upturned gaze. Then she raised the lyre and swept her fingers lightly over its strings, as she spoke:

“Our Gracious Queen has commissioned me, Euterpe, the Muse of Music, to visit earth to-night, to question those who are studying or working in the making or the performing of music, in order to learn whether they have any just conception of our great Art and its meaning. I would know if they have truly heard the voice of Music—whether it speaks to them, as the Voice once spoke to Moses out of the burning bush. In short, I would ask each, one and all, what music means to them, what message it brings to them. And first of all I will summon the children.”

She drew her fingers over the strings again, and then from within were heard the sounds of the childish orchestra. Soon the little procession appeared, marching with proud step, Phil and Harold leading, with their trumpets, Dorothy and Edith following, and two other

children behind, all with their bird-note instruments. On they came, along the veranda, playing with all their small might, till they reached the presence of the Muse of Music, when, after a special blast, they lowered their toy instruments and made a deep obeisance. The children were all in white, the girls with blue and the boys with red sashes. All wore cunning little white caps, decorated with a jaunty feather, and set perkily on one side of their curly or sleek little heads. They stood quietly before the Princess of Music, awaiting her commands. With a wave of her hand she motioned the two visiting children to place themselves on low stools at her side, to act as her attendants. Then she continued:

EUTERPE: Ah, I am glad to see the children; it shows me that Music speaks even to the little ones, that they are early learning to listen to her voice, and imitate her tones. [*Turning to Phil*] Tell me, little man, what do you like best in music?

PHIL: I like this trumpet, because I can play it myself. See, it has eight notes, and they go like this: [*He plays scale.*] But I like to listen to the piano, too, and when I'm a man I'm going to be a great musician.

EUTERPE: I am glad to hear you are al-

ready so fond of music, and intend to study into it deeply. And you, my boy, [*to Harold*] do you like music, too?

HAROLD: Yes, I like it. My trumpet has four notes; they go like this: [*Blows them.*] But I know a lot of notes on the piano, and when I am a man I think I shall be a fiddler.

(A suppressed ripple of merriment ran over the audience.)

EUTERPE: You are both valiant little musicians, and shall be my messengers for to-night.

[*Phil and Harold take their places at each side of the entrance, to await further orders.*]

EUTERPE: [*Turning to Edith*] And you, little maiden, have you listened to the voice of Music, and has it any charm for you?

EDITH: Yes, I have listened to the voice of Music in the ripple of the brook, in the rustle of the wind in the trees, and in the call of the cuckoo in the forest; and I can imitate the cuckoo with this: [*She plays some of the bird notes on the toy instrument.*]

EUTERPE: It pleases me to know that you have learned to hear the voices of Nature's music, for some of them are often difficult to discover. Few people ever hear the voice of the brook, for the children are often too heedless to listen, and grown people are too tall!

They don't trouble themselves to listen either. For the song of the brook is so tiny, that one must attend very closely in order to hear it. But it is wonderfully sweet, and fills us with quiet, tender thoughts. And you, my dear, [*turning to Dorothy*] what voice have you heard in Nature's harmony?

DOROTHY: I have listened to the insects and the birds; the robin, the blackbird and the woodpecker—I know them all. I have never heard a real nightingale, but I can imitate it with this: [*She plays on the nightingale instrument.*]

EUTERPE: It gives me joy to know that you have begun music at the right end, the end where we learn to listen. Before we proceed further, let us listen for a moment to the way in which two composers have voiced the song of bird and brook. [*She motions Edith and Dorothy to be seated near her.*]

The young girl at the piano now plays *The Little Bird*, by Grieg, and *The Brooklet*, by Heller. When the music ceases, Euterpe rises.

EUTERPE: Now, my little Heralds, [*to Phil and Harold*] will you blow upon your trumpets and summon before us a few of the various young people who have been and are studying music? We would question them and see

whether any of them have truly heard the voice of Music, and what it means to them.

[*The boys blow a lusty blast and in another moment a quaint little figure approaches the Princess. She is dressed in the style of fifty years ago: gaiters and white stockings with pantalettes; ruffled organdie frock with a silk sash at the side; coral beads about her neck and coral pins clasping the short sleeves at her shoulders; hair in long curls, held back with a round comb. She halts before Euterpe with a low curtsy.*]

EUTERPE: You must be one of the children of yesterday; when did you begin to study music?

GIRL OF YESTERDAY: When I was seven, ma'am.

EUTERPE: And *how* did you study?

GIRL OF YESTERDAY: I learned out of a big Instruction Book, called Bertini. My first piece was *The Sack Waltz*; then I had *The Maiden's Prayer*, and bye and bye, *Silveru Waves*. That's a very stylish piece.

EUTERPE: What does music really mean to you?

GIRL OF YESTERDAY: I don't quite know what you mean, ma'am.

EUTERPE: Perhaps not. Just sit there with

the others, and we will question further. [*The Heralds blow their trumpets. Enter Dawdler, a young girl, dressed in the extreme of fashion.*] I think this must be one of the members of a fashionable boarding-school of the present day. Well, my dear, are you one of the workers in music?

DAWDLER: Not much of a worker, I guess, for I don't love to practise; but Pa and Ma want me to "take," so I shan't be behind the other girls.

EUTERPE: Music has not much meaning for you yet, I take it.

DAWDLER: Oh, I like a nice waltz or two-step, but I'm not crazy about scales and exercises.

EUTERPE: I fear we shall not learn much about the Soul of Music from you. [*She waves Dawdler to one side.*] Now, my brave Heralds, another blast. [*The little trumpeters comply. Enter Mechanica, a demure maiden, dressed in gray, with hair smoothly parted and hanging in two braids. She carries a metronome.*]

MECHANICA [*bowing low*]: You wished to speak to me, madam?

EUTERPE: Yes; I want to know what Music means to you.

MECHANICA: It means hours and hours of practise every day, in order to get up a respectable technic; for my first care must be to acquire that. I can play scales now at 872 notes a minute, four notes to a beat; arpeggios at 720; chords from three F's down to three P's; but I must get scales and arpeggios up to a thousand notes a minute, and trills and other things from very loud down to an inaudible murmur, before I can hope to play the best music as it ought to be played.

EUTERPE: A fine technic is truly necessary, but there are other things of even more importance. Tell me, have you learned, with all your study, to listen to the myriad voices of Nature all about you—the voices of birds and insects—of rivulet and ocean?

MECHANICA: I haven't had any time to learn that; the Professor never taught me that way. I have always had to practise so many hours every day.

EUTERPE: To be sure! I see, from your answers, that your musical sense has not been awakened; you have not sought the Soul of Music—only the externals. We must look further. [*Mechanica seats herself with the others. The Herald's blow their trumpets. Enter*

Stretta, in great haste; she carries a couple of large, thick books under her arm, and bows hurriedly to the Princess.]

EUTERPE: Who is this who comes laden with such weighty knowledge?

STRETTA: They call me Stretta because I like to go through things in a hurry. Mother wants to make a musician of me. She says if I take lessons three years I can give a big concert. I have taken two years, six months and a half, and have played all of Beethoven's Sonatas and half of Liszt's Rhapsodies.

EUTERPE: You are certainly rushing with lightning speed. Do you find the Sonatas beautiful and full of meaning, and have you memorized any of them?

STRETTA: Oh, no; I don't have to play them by heart—the hardest have too many black notes.

EUTERPE: It is plain that you have little idea of the meaning of these master works. Come, another blast, my Heralds. [*Enter Reve, the Dreamer, a maiden with floating, flaxen hair and a rapt expression; she is clad in pale green.*]

EUTERPE: Can you enlighten us as to what music means, Reve?

REVE: Oh, I love music, just *love* it, but I never can express what I feel. My teacher always chides me for putting my own expression into the piece, instead of obeying the marks put there by the composer. But I like to play the way I feel, and I *feel* so much when I play! [*Sighs ecstatically, with eyes uplifted.*]

EUTERPE: You need some of Mechanica's industry and solidity as a foundation to your feelings. But here comes Papillon, the Butterfly. Let us hear from her.

[*Enter Papillon, tripping and dancing. Her thin white garments flutter as she moves, her sandals are winged, and gauzy butterfly wings adorn her shoulders. She makes a deep curtsy before the Princess of Music.*]

PAPILLON: What is your will, Gracious Lady?

EUTERPE: We want to know what Music means to you and how you would express it?

PAPILLON: Ah, Music means all that is light and gay and beautiful to me. The birds sing it, as they wing their way up to the blue; the bees hum it, the rivulet murmurs it, and I love best to express it by dancing—dancing—dancing all the day. [*She poses and dances before the Princess.*]

EUTERPE: Truly, Papillon, you represent the light and graceful side of music, and we cannot do without this side of our great Art. [*She waves her hand to the Butterfly.*] Now, my worthy little Heralds, one more blast. [*Enter Ernesto.*] Here is Ernesto, he of the serious brow and earnest eyes. He is a student and scholar, an interpreter; he surely can give us the meaning of Music.

ERNESTO: The longer I study Music, the more it means to me. I find in it the voices of Nature; but more than these, I find that all my feelings and emotions—my every mood—can be expressed in tones. I learned long ago, that, to be able to express and interpret all these, I needed the best possible technic. I have also learned to feast my eyes on the glories of Nature, to fill my mind with beautiful images of thought, and my heart with love for everything that is good and true, so that I may understand and express the perfect harmony of great Music.

EUTERPE: Well said, Ernesto. You are, I am sure, a true and worthy interpreter. You are on the right road, and will surely go on to perfection.

[*A voice from the garden is heard singing;*

all listen attentively. Soon a man enters wrapped in a long cloak, which he tosses aside. Going to the piano, he plays a few rich harmonies. Then turning to Euterpe, he says, in a voice like music itself:]

COMPOSER: Ah, Music, Heavenly Maid, are you training a new group of Muses, who shall interpret the works of the modern composers?

EUTERPE: Hardly that. These assembled about me are young students, and some of them at least desire to know the mysteries of Music.

COMPOSER: Who can penetrate to the heart of her mysteries save the composer himself; he possesses the golden key which opens the heavenly gates to divine harmonies.

EUTERPE: It is passing strange, that of the many who seek the key, so few ever find it.

COMPOSER: All may find it, if they seek for it with all their hearts and in the right way. But you must have enthusiasm, my children—you can do nothing without that. You must be in earnest, with determination and high ideals, and your hearts must be pure. With love and purity, you will find the meaning and the Soul of Music. [*He goes to the piano again, and without sitting down, plays a hymn-like melody. All sing the verse.*]

TO MUSIC (*Melody by Schubert*)

O lovely Art, our joy and inspiration,
Whose wondrous power doth free us from all care;
Thou own'st my heart, through all my life's duration;
The world rejoices in thy magic sway.

EUTERPE: Music is the universal language, and expresses what is gay, bright and joyous, as well as what is serious, solemn and exalted. So, to-night, let us have the bright side of music; let us be joyous and dance as well as sing.

[*At a wave of her hand, all join hands and dance about the Princess and the Composer, to the strains of some of the Dances of Schubert, played upon the piano.*]

The little company broke into enthusiastic applause, as the music and dancing ended.

Then followed an hour of pleasant talk and chat, as the guests sat about on the veranda and lawn, sipping their ices.

When the last guest had departed, Herbert set about extinguishing the colored lanterns, while Marianne tucked the drowsy but supremely happy twins in their little beds. When this was done, the grown-ups came out on the veranda to talk it all over.

“I bow to the Princess of Music; I'm proud

of you," said Herbert Richmond, with his hands on his sister's shoulders.

"I think myself it was rather pretty, and everybody seemed to like it," answered the Princess.

"And weren't the children too dear for anything?" said Marianne. "This has been a great summer for them, and for me too. I have learned many things, and done much serious thinking—for me—though you may not have given me credit for so doing. At all events, I have decided to take up my music again, just as soon as we return to the city and are settled. For I am going to give my children a musical atmosphere, *at home*."

"Good for you, Marianne!" cried her husband. "I see, Helen, there's plenty of work ahead of you; for with the quartette, Marianne and Mary Scott added to your already large class, you will have your hands full."

"And then next summer you must surely come to us again," finished Marianne.

"Perhaps I may—if I am free to do so," answered Helen, with her winning smile.

THE END



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